

A woman with dark hair styled in an updo, wearing a purple and pink dress and a floral headband, is posing in front of a wall of flowers. The wall is covered in a dense arrangement of purple, pink, and white roses and other flowers. The woman is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a purple sleeveless top with a pink skirt, and purple high-heeled sandals. She has her hands on her hips and is wearing several rings and a bracelet.

iwa

INSPIRING
WOMAN
AFRICA

EDITION 32, 31ST MARCH 2026

Dr

NKIRU

OLUMIDE-OJO (PhD)

VISIONARY EXECUTIVE, MULTINATIONAL LEADER

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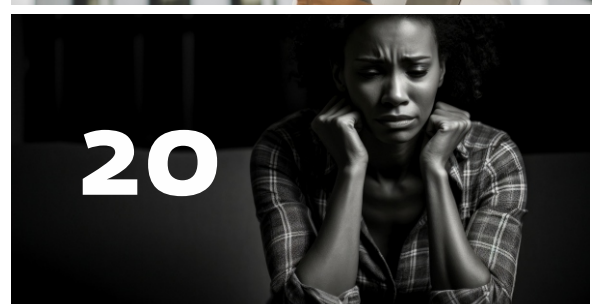
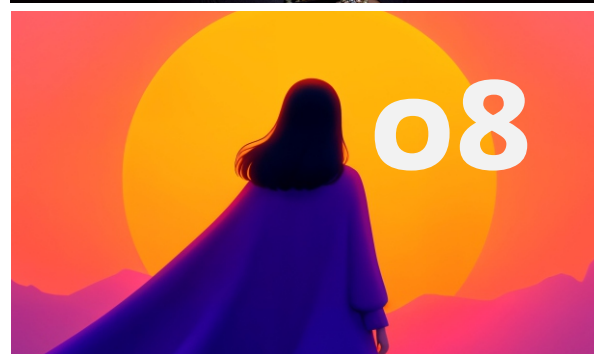
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FINANCIAL AdviseHER

The Cost of Waiting: Why You Should Start Investing Now



**Kemi
Ajumobi**

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Welcome!

Dear Readers,

Hellooooo!!! That was really loud right? I know. I know...it's just that it is hard to contain my joy every edition of IWA. Though I am having mixed feelings, but it's still a good one. Let me explain why. I have enjoyed the weekly celebration of women in this special month of globally celebrating women all over the world, but the good side is, even though this is the last edition in March, celebrating women continues for us because it is what we do regularly so we ain't done celebrating women and we would be doing this for a loooooong time!

So, we thought to ourselves, how best do we end the month of celebrating women if not with the gorgeous, stunning, brilliant, caring, go-getting international corporate executive, an amazing mother to her children and fantastic wife to her husband, if not Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo (PhD).

I mean, check out our cover picture and tell me it is not more than qualified to end March? It fits perfectly, we had no choice!

Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo (PhD) is a Pan-African corporate executive and leadership advocate with more than twenty years of experience working across financial services, telecommunications, and aviation. She currently serves on the Africa Regions leadership platform of a leading financial services group in South Africa, where she oversees marketing, stakeholder engagement, corporate communications, and social impact initiatives across multiple African markets and UK offshore territories. She is also the Founder of The LightHouse Network and The Working Girl Circle. Find out more about her in this edition.

Here are other articles in this edition:

FINANCIAL AdviseHER: The Cost of Waiting: Why You Should Start Investing Now. By Sola Adesakin.

HER POINT OF VIEW: The Career Advantage of Thinking Like an Owner. By Chinyere Okorochoa.

WOMAN EXECUTIVE: Beyond the "Superwoman" Archetype: The Power of Strategic Nos. By Wola Joseph-Condotti.

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HOLISTIC LIVING: The Holistic Secret to Overcoming Anxiety. By Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri.

WE'VE GOT MEN: Tola Adeyemi, CEO KPMG One Africa.

WOMAN AT THE HELM: Maya Horgan Famodu, Founder & Partner at Ingressive Capital.

We are just 7 days away, don't miss us too much, we promise to be here soonest!

Take care!



COVER INTERVIEW

Dr. NKIRU
OLUMIDE-OJO (PhD)

VISIONARY EXECUTIVE,
MULTINATIONAL LEADER

Kemi Ajumobi



One of the biggest lessons I have learnt working across multiple markets is that Africa is not one market



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leadership advocate with more than twenty years of experience working across financial services, telecommunications, and aviation. She currently serves on the Africa Regions leadership platform of a leading financial services group in South Africa, where she oversees marketing, stakeholder engagement, corporate communications, and social impact initiatives across multiple African markets and UK offshore territories. Dr. Olumide-Ojo holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand and is the founder of The LightHouse Network, a platform dedicated to developing young professionals and empowering women through mentorship and leadership development. Alongside academic works, she is also the author of The Pressure Cooker and Step Forward.

▶ **Key challenges managing multinational brands**

One of the biggest lessons I have learnt working across multiple markets is that Africa is not one market. Each country has different cultural expectations, regulatory realities, and stakeholder sensitivities. The key is understanding local context while maintaining a consistent brand narrative. When you build trust with stakeholders before



challenges arise, managing reputation across markets becomes much easier.

▶ **Essential skills for emerging leaders**

The most important skill today is self-leadership—knowing yourself first!, knowing your values, your discipline, and your purpose. Beyond that, emerging leaders need critical thinking, collaboration, and integrity. In a fast-changing world, leadership is less about authority and more about judgment and responsibility.

▶ **Fostering teamwork across cross-border teams**

Cross-border collaboration works when three things are clear: purpose, trust, and communication. Teams must understand why they are working together, trust each other's intentions, and communicate consistently. When those elements are in place, geography stops being a barrier to performance.

▶ **The LightHouse Network**

The LightHouse Network was created first to solve for the needs of the working Girl, it has over time, stretched out to helping young people translate potential into opportunity. Many talented youths simply lack guidance on navigating the marketplace. Like a lighthouse guiding ships, our role is to provide direction, mentorship, and practical leadership development.

▶ **Rewarding outcomes of The Working Girl Circle**

The most rewarding outcome has been seeing young women find their voice and confidence in the workplace. The Working Girl Circle provides a safe space for honest conversations about career growth and leadership. Watching many of them step into leadership roles themselves have been incredibly fulfilling.



The Working Girl Circle provides a safe space for honest conversations about career growth and leadership

▶ **Role of corporations in women's empowerment**

Corporations play a critical role in shaping inclusive growth. Supporting women through leadership pipelines, mentorship, and fair workplace policies is not just socially responsible—it is

also smart business. Research has shown that when women thrive, organisations and economies thrive as well.

▶ **Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo's story**

My story is really about preparedness to seize opportunities, discipline and what I like to call 'the hand of God'. I have had the privilege of working for great brands across sectors—from aviation to telecommunications to financial services—always focusing on leadership, reputation, and stakeholder trust. Along the way, I've learnt that institutions succeed when credibility





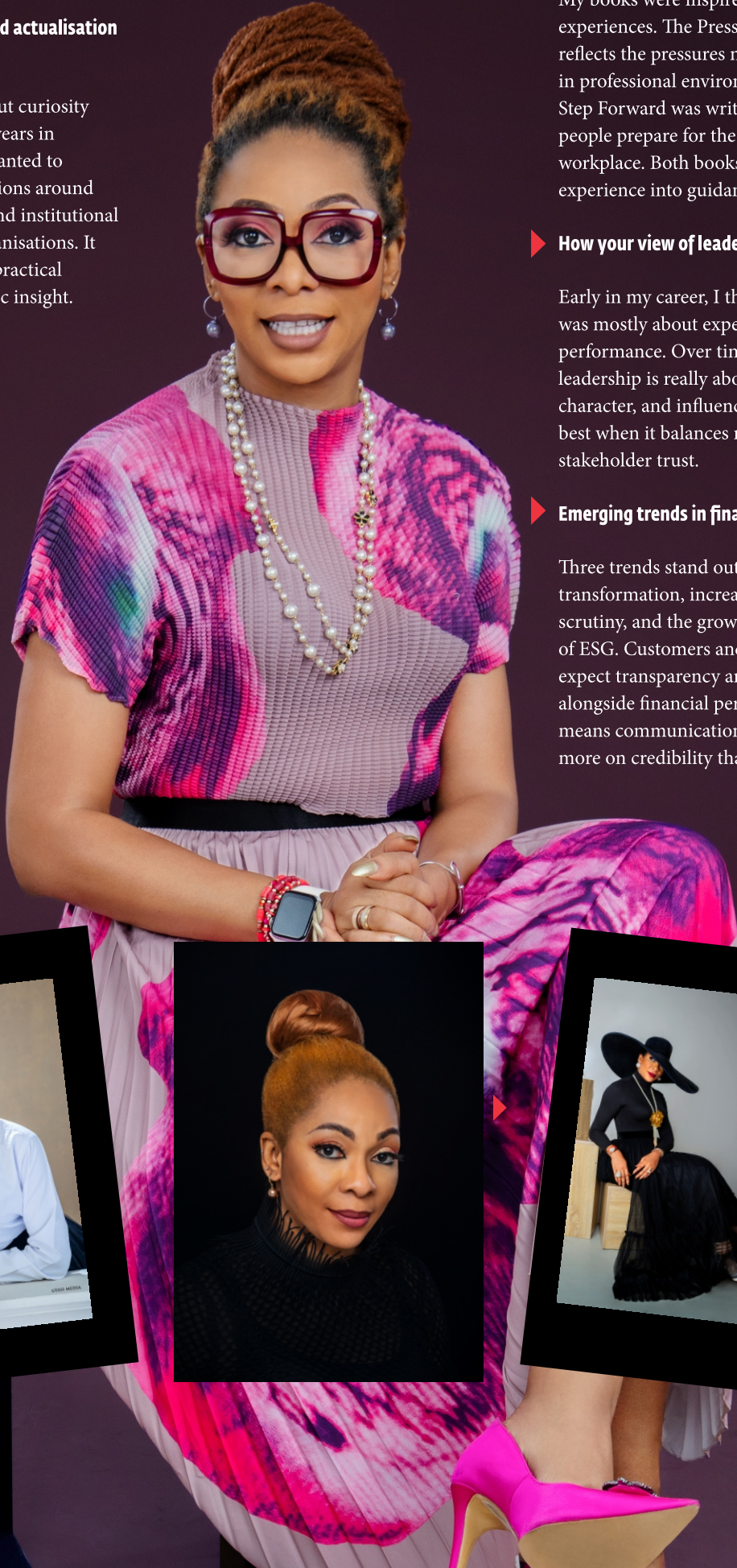
and purpose are at the centre of strategy.

► **Reason for the pursuit and actualisation of getting a PhD**

Pursuing a PhD was about curiosity and contribution. After years in executive leadership, I wanted to explore the deeper questions around leadership, reputation, and institutional trust within African organisations. It allowed me to combine practical experience with academic insight.



Strategy works best when it balances results with stakeholder trust



► **Writing journey and your books**

My books were inspired by real experiences. The Pressure Cooker reflects the pressures many women face in professional environments, while Step Forward was written to help young people prepare for the realities of the workplace. Both books aim to turn experience into guidance.

► **How your view of leadership evolved**

Early in my career, I thought leadership was mostly about expertise and performance. Over time, I realised leadership is really about judgment, character, and influence. Strategy works best when it balances results with stakeholder trust.

► **Emerging trends in financial services**

Three trends stand out: digital transformation, increasing stakeholder scrutiny, and the growing importance of ESG. Customers and investors now expect transparency and social impact alongside financial performance. That means communications must focus more on credibility than promotion.





▶ **Future of corporate social responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility is moving from philanthropy to strategic investment in society. Companies now understand that empowering youth and women strengthens economies and future talent pipelines. The most effective initiatives will be those that are measurable and scalable.

▶ **Your five-year goals**

Over the next five years, I hope to continue contributing to leadership and strategy across African markets while expanding the reach of The LightHouse Network. My goal is to help develop leaders and institutions that create sustainable value for society.

▶ **Reflections over resolutions**

I prefer reflection over resolutions. Instead of long lists of goals, I encourage people to focus on habits and intentional growth. Real progress usually comes from small, consistent improvements over time.

Concluding words

Leadership ultimately comes down to responsibility—to the people we lead, the institutions we represent, and the communities we serve. When leadership is grounded in integrity and purpose, the impact can extend far beyond individual success.

“When leadership is grounded in integrity and purpose, the impact can extend far beyond individual success.”





WOMAN EXECUTIVE

Beyond the "Superwoman" Archetype: The Power of Strategic Nos

By Wola Joseph-Condotti



There is a quiet but dangerous myth still circulating in professional circles. Especially

among women. It is the myth that to be powerful, we must be everything to everyone. That strength means saying "yes" to every request. That leadership means showing up for everything and never admitting we are tired. It is the Superwoman archetype, and it is seductive. She is poised, productive, present for everyone, and perpetually performing. She never drops a ball. She never needs help. And, let us be honest, she is also a figment of societal imagination. Because behind every Superwoman cape is a woman gasping for air.

The Pressure to Be Everything

As women, we have been conditioned (sometimes culturally, sometimes emotionally, sometimes spiritually) to carry the weight of others' expectations. We are trained to please, to prove, to perform.

We say "yes" because we do not want to disappoint.
We say "yes" because we think it is expected.
We say "yes" because "No" feels like rebellion.

But here is the truth that changed my life: Success is often defined not by what you do, but by what you refuse to do.

A "No" to distractions is a "Yes" to destiny.
A "No" to burnout is a "Yes" to balance.
A "No" to pleasing everyone is a "Yes" to preserving purpose.

Boundaries are not barriers to greatness. They are the road signs that help you get there intact.

The Spirit-Led "No"

Not every open door is your assignment. Not every opportunity is aligned with your season. And not every expectation deserves your energy. One of the most powerful forms of spiritual maturity is discernment. The ability to say, "This is good, but it's not God. Not for me. Not now." As executives, we are not just managing time, we are stewarding vision. Every "yes" has a cost. And too many women are paying with their health, their peace, their families, their voice. Jesus Himself (perfect in love, limitless in power) walked away from the crowds to recharge. He retreated to the mountains. He declined certain invitations. He did not heal everyone in every town. And yet, He fulfilled His purpose. So why do we think our power is in

saying yes to everything?

Boundaries as a Leadership Tool

Contrary to popular belief, boundaries do not make you less effective. They make you sustainable. When your calendar is ruled by people-pleasing, your calling suffers. When you are always available, you become perpetually exhausted. In fact, I have found that leaders who set the clearest boundaries often create the greatest impact. They conserve energy for what truly matters. They do not show up everywhere, but they show up where it counts.

Let us be clear, boundaries don't mean being unkind. They mean being clear. Kindness and clarity can and should coexist.

Courage to Disappoint Strategically

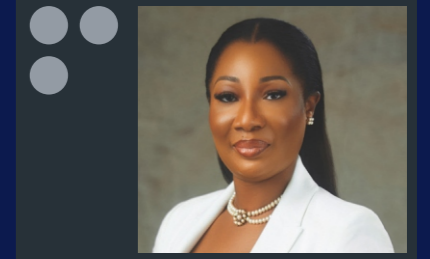
One of the hardest lessons I have learned as a leader, wife, mother, and mentor is this: You will disappoint someone. Choose who wisely. Your "No" may disappoint others temporarily... But your "Yes" to everything will eventually disappoint yourself. So choose the kind of life that is worth disappointing people for. One rooted in values, not validation.

Final Word: Redefining Power

Dear woman leader, your strength is not in how much you carry. It is in how intentionally you carry what is truly yours.

You are not here to prove your worth by depletion. You are not called to earn your seat by exhaustion. You are not designed to hustle endlessly to be seen. Let go of the cape. Hold fast to clarity. And give yourself permission to lead with peace, not pressure.

Because when you start saying strategic No's, you make room for your most powerful Yes: To purpose. To alignment. To longevity. And that, dear Superwoman, is your real superpower.



Wola Joseph Condotti

Chief Executive Officer, Eko Electricity Distribution Company

Wola is the CEO of Eko Electricity Distribution Company (Eko Disco).

Prior to her current role, she was the Group MD/CEO of West Power & Gas Limited, the parent company of Eko Electricity Distribution PLC (EKEDP) and six other affiliate companies with interests in both conventional and renewable energy sectors. In addition to this role, she serves as the Director of the Power and Renewable Division at the Women in Energy Network (WIEN) in a non-executive capacity.

Wola Joseph Condotti was also the pioneer Chief, Legal & Company Secretariat at EKEDP. During her tenure, she also held multiple key positions simultaneously including Head of Regulatory Compliance, Chief Human Resources and Administration Officer, Supervising Chief of the Customer Service Department, and Data Protection Officer. Her previous experience includes roles as General Counsel/Company Secretariat Lagoon Home Savings and Loans, and Legal Associate at Banwo & Ighodalo.

Wola holds a law degree from the University of Ibadan, an LLM in International Finance Law from Harvard Law School, and an MBA from INSEAD Business School. She is also an International Finance Corporation (World Bank) Board Evaluation Certified Professional and Corporate Governance Trainer.

Wola's achievements have earned widespread recognition. Most recently, she received the inaugural Leadership Excellence Award of the Year at the Legal Era Africa Awards 2024, becoming the first-ever recipient of this category. The award celebrated her historic transition from General Counsel to Group MD/CEO, a milestone applauded for redefining leadership pathways in the legal profession.

She is a member of the Institute of Directors and the Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria. Additionally, she is an associate member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria, and Women in Management, Business, and Public Service.



When Culture Turns Against Women: Lessons from Ozoro Community Festival, Delta State

Asmau Benzie Leo

The recent violence against women in Isoko North LGA, Delta State, has once again forced Nigeria into an uncomfortable but necessary reckoning: when does culture become a cover for abuse?

Disturbing viral video reports and images from a traditional festival known as the Alue -Do (Ozoro Festival) in Isoko LGA, Delta State in Nigeria showed women being chased, stripped, and sexually assaulted in public spaces, triggering nationwide outrage.

While some community voices insist the event is merely a fertility rite rooted in tradition, they also acknowledge that what occurred during the festival was pure

harassment, molestation, and mob assault targeted at women hence was unacceptable and criminal. This criminality was enabled by silence, complicity, and weak accountability.

To dismiss the incident as the misconduct of “a few youths” is to ignore a deeper and more troubling reality: the intersection of culture, masculinity, and gender based violence (GBV) in Nigeria.

Historically, many African societies including those in southern Nigeria have preserved rituals tied to fertility, womanhood, and communal identity. These traditions were not inherently violent. However, over time, patriarchal distortions have reshaped some practices into instruments of control, where women's bodies are treated as symbols rather than as autonomous human beings deserving dignity and protection.

The Ozoro community festival incident reflects this dangerous evolution. A system that informally warns women to remain indoors during certain cultural observances reveals a troubling logic: instead of restraining perpetrators, responsibility is shifted to potential victims. This is not cultural preservation, it is normalising fear and violence.

Masculinity, as socially constructed in many parts of Nigeria, further compounds the problem. Young men are often socialised into equating manhood with dominance, entitlement, and sexual conquest. When such ideas are reinforced by cultural silence and weak institutional responses, they can erupt into collective violence. The public and coordinated nature of the assaults during the festival suggests not just an isolated misconduct but a broader social tolerance for abuse.

The consequences for women and girls are severe and enduring. Beyond physical harm, survivors, their families and communities have to endure deep psychological trauma, stigma, and long term insecurity. Many women and girls reportedly retreated indoors out of fear, disrupting their education, business and their daily lives and limiting their participation in public and economic spaces. This erosion of freedom of movement, expression, and safety is one of the most insidious impacts of GBV. Over time, such incidents reinforce cycles of silence, underreporting, and normalised abuse across communities.

Yet, this is not an isolated case. Across Nigeria, from rural communities to urban centers, gender based violence persists where harmful norms intersect with weak enforcement and limited access to justice. Addressing this crisis requires more than public condemnation, it demands systemic reform, particularly within government policy, security systems, and the justice sector.

First, government policy must move from intention to impact. Nigeria already has legal frameworks such as the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Act, which criminalises various forms of abuse and provides protections for victims. However, uneven domestication across states and poor enforcement continue to limit its effectiveness. State governments, including Delta State, must fully implement these laws by allocating resources for its enforcement, and invest in survivor support services, including

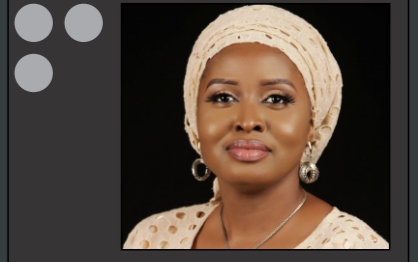
shelters, legal aid, and psychosocial care. Policies must also explicitly confront harmful cultural practices and impose clear sanctions against violations carried out in the name of tradition.

Second, security sector reform is critical. Law enforcement agencies must anticipate and secure high risk events such as traditional festivals where patterns indicate potential for abuse. Preventive deployment, intelligence gathering, and community policing should be a standard practice. Security presence must be proactive, not symbolic. Equally important is building trust so survivors can report violations without fear of stigma or retaliation.

Third, the justice system must be strengthened to end impunity. Survivors of sexual and gender based violence often face delays, secondary victimisation, and low conviction rates. Establishing specialised GBV courts, fast tracking procedures, and survivor centered approaches can significantly improve outcomes. When perpetrators are swiftly investigated, prosecuted, and punished, it sends a clear message that no cultural justification will shield criminal acts.

Traditional institutions also have a pivotal role to play. As custodians of culture, they must lead efforts to reform or abolish practices that endanger women and girls. Culture is not static, it evolves with society. Any tradition that requires women to hide for safety or risk violation has already lost its moral legitimacy. Community leaders must denounce violence, enforce internal accountability, and collaborate with government to protect all citizens.

The lessons from the Ozoro community Festival is clear: no culture, no matter how ancient, can stand above human dignity. Hence, Ending gender based violence in Nigeria requires a coordinated action; legal, institutional, and cultural. The choice is stark, preserve traditions that protect life and dignity, or continue to excuse systems that enable harm.



Dr. Asmau Benzie Leo

Executive Director, Centre for Nonviolence and Gender Advocacy in Nigeria (CENGAIN)

Dr. Asmau Benzie Leo is a development practitioner with extensive national and international expertise in gender equality, peace-building, governance, and humanitarian action.

She holds a PhD in Public Governance and Leadership, a Master's degree in Conflict Management and Peace Studies, and executive certifications from leading institutions including Howard University, Harvard University and Glasgow Caledonian University.

As Executive Director of the Centre for Non-violence and Gender Advocacy in Nigeria (CENGAIN), she has led ground-breaking advocacy initiatives on women's political participation, gender-based violence prevention, and security sector reform across multiple World Bank, UN and EU-supported projects.

Internationally, Dr. Leo has represented civil society at the United Nations, contributed to regional dialogues on Women, Peace and Security, and partnered with global networks advancing gender justice and inclusive governance.

She is a UN Recognised Global Ambassador on Women, Peace and Security. Her expertise bridges grassroots action with policy advocacy, making her a respected voice in advancing gender equality and sustainable peace in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

FINANCIAL AdviseHER

The Cost of Waiting: Why You Should Start Investing Now

By Sola Adesakin

As a Chartered Accountant, from my personal experience and the experience of many others, one of the most common regrets people express when they begin investing is simple: "I wish I started earlier."

Not because they lacked intelligence or lacked income, but because they misunderstood what investing really required.

Many people delay investing for years because of a few assumptions that feel reasonable at the time but quietly cost them progress. The truth is that wealth building rarely fails because of lack of opportunity. It often fails because of hesitation.

If you are still waiting to start investing, it may be helpful to examine some of the misconceptions that hold people back. These are things I learnt much later in my investing journey.

1. Waiting for "big money" to start

A common belief is that investing requires a large amount of capital. People assume they must accumulate a significant sum before they begin.

In reality, investing rewards consistency far more than size.

Small amounts invested regularly can grow meaningfully over time. A few thousand naira set aside every month may not feel dramatic, but discipline compounds. What matters is not the initial size of the investment but the habit of participating.

Many people delay because they want the first investment to feel impressive. But the real progress comes from starting small and staying consistent.

2. Assuming investing is too complex

Another barrier is intimidation. The world of investing can appear technical, filled with unfamiliar language and complicated strategies.

Because of this, many people postpone learning, telling themselves they will begin once they understand everything.

But investing does not require mastering every concept on day one. It often begins with simple steps: understanding savings vehicles, exploring mutual funds, learning about stocks, or participating in structured investment platforms.

Clarity usually follows action. The more you engage with the process, the more comfortable it becomes.

3. Expecting quick, dramatic returns

Some people approach investing with the expectation that large profits should come quickly. This mindset often leads them toward risky or unregulated opportunities promising extraordinary returns.

History shows that excitement is not a strategy.

Sustainable investing usually happens within regulated environments such as mutual funds, publicly traded stocks, diversified portfolios, or verified



financial institutions. These options may not promise overnight wealth, but they offer something more valuable: stability and credibility.

The goal of investing is not sudden windfalls. It is steady growth.

4. Treating money conversations as taboo

Money is often treated as a private subject that should never be discussed. While discretion is important, complete silence can also lead to isolation.

Financial growth is easier when ideas, experiences, and lessons are shared. Learning in community helps people avoid mistakes and discover opportunities they might never encounter alone.

Accountability partners, small financial

groups, and responsible discussions about money can strengthen discipline and expand perspective.

Healthy financial conversations are not about comparison. They are about learning.

5. Thinking investing means only one thing

For many years, people associated investing almost exclusively with stocks. While equities remain an important asset class, the investment landscape today is much broader.

Investors can now participate in mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, real estate opportunities, gold and commodities, fixed-income securities, and diversified portfolios designed for different risk levels.

Understanding that investing includes

multiple asset classes helps individuals build balanced strategies rather than relying on a single opportunity.

6. Confusing income with wealth

Another subtle delay occurs when individuals rely entirely on their salaries or business income and assume that steady earnings automatically translate into financial security.

Income is important, but it is not the same as wealth.

Income is fuel. Wealth is what happens when that fuel is directed into assets that grow, produce returns, and create long-term stability.

Without a strategy, income disappears into expenses. With intention, income becomes the seed for investments that build future independence.

The most significant mistake many people make is simply waiting.

Waiting to earn more money.
Waiting to fully understand the market.
Waiting for the perfect time.

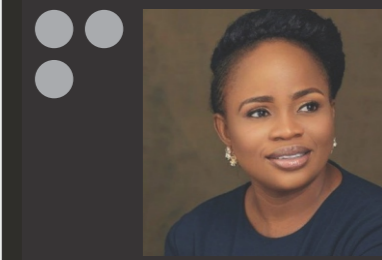
But investing rarely begins under perfect conditions. It begins with small steps taken consistently.

The earlier those steps begin, the more time has to work in your favor. Time is one of the most powerful forces in wealth creation because it allows compounding to do its work.

Starting imperfectly today is far more powerful than waiting for perfect clarity tomorrow.

Wherever you are in your financial journey, the most important decision is not whether you started early enough. It is whether you are willing to start now.

Because in investing, progress belongs not to those who waited for certainty, but to those who chose to begin.



By Sola Adesakin

Founder and Lead Coach,
Smart Stewards

Sola Adesakin is a highly respected wealth coach and chartered accountant with over two decades of transformative impact in the finance industry. As the visionary founder of Smart Stewards Financial Advisory Limited and Smart Stewards Advisory LLC, she has revolutionized the financial wellbeing of countless individuals and businesses across 40 countries. Her methodical approach to 'make-manage-multiply' money principles has elevated many from financial stress to prosperity, and mediocrity to exceptional achievement.

Sola is a strong supporter of SDG5 and SDG10, as she seeks to close the gender gap and reduce inequality through financial education, financial technology, and access to funding. Sola's dedication to achieving gender equality and reducing inequality is evident in her work as an alumna of the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, an initiative of the US Embassy in Nigeria, and the Cherie Blair Foundation's Road to Growth Program. She is also an alumna of Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women program and a member of the Select Global Women in Tech (SGWIT) Mentorship Network of the United States of America. Through the FRUIT Foundation, which she serves as Founder and CEO, she has partnered with the US consulate in Nigeria to champion the economic empowerment of women, assisting them to start and scale their business ventures.

Her impressive academic credentials include a BSc and an MBA degree from Oxford Brookes University and Edinburgh Business School, respectively. She is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants of the United Kingdom (ACCA), and a member of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA). In addition to her impressive credentials, Sola Adesakin is also a Certified Financial Education InstructorSM and a member of the Personal Finance Speakers Association.

HER POINT OF VIEW

The Career Advantage of Thinking Like an Owner

Chinyere Okorochoa



“Employees fulfill roles.
Owners create legacies.”

There is something I have observed consistently over the years, not just from my 30 plus years in practice, but from travelling across over 40 countries, attending conferences, sitting in boardrooms, and engaging with women from different cultures and industries.

The women who rise are not always the most hardworking. They are not always the most brilliant either. But they think differently.

Early in my career, I was like many young

professionals, eager, diligent, and focused on doing a good job. I met my deadlines. I delivered quality work. I stayed in my lane. And for a while, that felt like enough.

Until I realised something uncomfortable.

Doing a good job will keep you employed. But it will not necessarily make you exceptional.

The turning point for me came when I began to shift my thinking. I stopped asking, “What is required of me?” and started asking, “What more can I contribute?”

That shift is what I now describe as thinking like an owner.

Thinking like an owner is not about your title. It is not about whether your name is on the door. It is a mindset. It is how you approach your work, your responsibilities, and ultimately, your career.

An employee focuses on completing tasks. An owner focuses on creating value.

Let me paint a simple picture.

Two professionals are given the same assignment. Both are competent. Both deliver.

But one stops at delivery. The other goes further. She asks, “How does this impact the client? Can this process be improved? Is there a smarter way to do this?”

She is not just working in the business. She is thinking for the business. And trust me, that difference never goes unnoticed.

One of the biggest mistakes I see many women make is waiting. Waiting to be noticed. Waiting to be told what to do next. Waiting for permission to step up.

My dear, permission is rarely given. It is demonstrated.

When you begin to think like an owner, you naturally step into a different level of visibility. You stop walking past problems because “it is not your responsibility.” Instead, you step in with solutions. You begin to anticipate, not just react. And something powerful happens. People start to trust you with more. Your voice carries more weight. Your name begins to come up in rooms you are not even in.

I remember a period in my career when I began to consciously adopt this mindset. Instead of simply executing instructions, I started looking at the bigger picture, the client’s needs, the firm’s goals, the long-term impact of our work. I would propose ideas. Suggest improvements. Think ahead.

Was I always right? No. But I was always thinking. And that made all the difference. For women especially, this mindset is critical.

We are often raised, even subtly, to be compliant, to do what is expected, to avoid “overstepping.” But leadership does not come from staying within the lines. It comes from expanding them.

Thinking like an owner also changes how you measure success. It is no longer about how busy you are, but how impactful you are.

You begin to ask better questions. If this were my business, what would I do differently?

How does my work contribute to growth? What problem can I solve today?

And suddenly, your work becomes more intentional. More strategic. More visible.

It also protects you from burnout.

Yes, you heard me.

Because when you focus on outcomes rather than endless activity, you begin to work smarter. You prioritise what truly matters. You stop trying to do everything and start focusing on what moves the needle.

And that is where sustainable success lives.

Let me leave you with a simple challenge. This week, identify one thing in your workplace that is not working as well as it should. Something people complain about but no one has taken ownership of.

Ask yourself, if I were leading this team, how would I fix it?

Then take a step. Suggest an idea. Start a conversation. Offer a solution. You may think it is a small act, but it is not. That is how leaders are formed.

You do not become a leader the day you are given the title. You become a leader the day you start thinking like one.

And here is the truth I want you to carry with you.

Your career will not be defined by how well you followed instructions. It will be defined by the value you created.

So the next time you walk into your office, your meeting, or your next big opportunity, pause for a moment and ask yourself:

“If this were mine, how would I show up?” Then show up that way.

Because employees fulfill roles. But owners create legacies.

And you, my dear, were not created to be ordinary.



Chinyere Okorochoa

Partner in the Law Firm of JACKSON, ETTI & EDU

With over three decades of experience as a trailblazer in the legal profession, Chinyere Okorochoa has established herself as a leading voice in law, leadership, and career growth for women. As a partner in one of the most prestigious law firms in the country, she has not only navigated the complexities of a competitive industry but has consistently broken barriers to become a sought-after leader, mentor, and advocate for women in the workplace.

Chinyere’s career journey is a testament to her resilience, vision, and versatility. She has held numerous leadership positions, served as a director on multiple boards, and is widely admired for her strategic thinking and ability to inspire teams toward excellence. Beyond her professional accomplishments, she has also graced stages as a speaker, sharing insights on leadership, career growth, and the unique challenges women face in their professional lives.

A devoted wife and proud mother of three, Chinyere understands firsthand the challenges of balancing the demands of a thriving career with a fulfilling personal life. Through her own experiences, she has mastered the art of work-life integration, demonstrating that women can achieve extraordinary professional success without sacrificing the joys of family and personal well-being.

Her career development platform, Heels & Ladders, is dedicated to mentoring and guiding women who aspire to redefine success, achieve career mastery, and lead with purpose. Whether you’re navigating leadership challenges, striving for balance, or looking to amplify your influence, Chinyere’s expertise will help you transform ambition into achievement.



WOMAN AT THE HELM

Maya Horgan Famodu

Founder & Partner at Ingressive Capital

Maya Horgan-Famodu is a venture capital investor, entrepreneur, and 2x Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree. She is also a Kauffman Fellow, Young Leaders Council (YLC) and Young Leaders Global (YLG) member. She founded Ingressive Capital, a \$10 Million Fund I and \$50 Million Fund II focused on early-stage African tech; Ingressive for Good, a non-profit providing micro-scholarships, technical skills training, and talent placement; and Ingressive Advisory, a firm offering market entry services and tech research for corporates and investors.

Ingressive Capital portfolio

companies include Paystack, Bamboo, Carry1st, Mono, Tizeti, Lenco, Jetstream, 54gene, and OZÉ among many others.

Ingressive Advisory has worked with over 50 venture firms and tech companies seeking to enter and operate in sub-Saharan Africa. Past clients include Y Combinator, 500 Startups, New Relic, USAID, GitHub, and Techstars, to name a few. Clients have made over 70 investments into Africa-based tech, and several have launched joint ventures through Ingressive's market entry services.

"One thing that strikes me about Maya is how she genuinely helps the founders she meets, even those who

aren't in our portfolio, and gives them access to her network and partnerships that will aid their growth. She has an eye for businesses with the potential to succeed." Uwem Uwemakpan, Head of Investments at Launch Africa, stated.

Maya attended Pomona College after completing the Cornell University Prelaw Program and worked in banking at JPMorgan Chase. Before starting Ingressive, she conducted emerging market economic research in Southern Africa and Latin America, taking students with her to explore sustainable economic development. She also worked in private equity research, advising businesses entering the West African market.



WE'VE GOT MEN

Tola Adeyemi

CEO KPMG One Africa

Tola Adeyemi is currently the Chief Executive Officer for KPMG One Africa. He was admitted as a partner of the Firm in the year 2000. Before assuming his current role, Tola was the Partner & Head of the Audit & Assurance Services division of the Firm and has over 37 years of professional experience advising local and international clients across various industries and sectors of the economy including financial services, consumer & industrial market, energy & natural resources, telecommunications and public sector.

Tola has a first-class honours degree in Accounting from the University of Ife, Ile-Ife (now OAU). He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria, Member of the Institute of Directors (IoD) and a former Board member of the Audit Faculty of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN). He is an alumnus of various top

management and leadership programmes of the Lagos Business School, Harvard Business School, Wharton and INSEAD.

As KPMG West Africa CEO, Tola is responsible for shaping and defining KPMG's developmental strategy in the region. As Country Managing Partner of KPMG in Nigeria, he promotes and provides leadership and direction for the Firm's business, working in collaboration with partners and staff to drive and deliver on KPMG's strategy and growth agenda. He is a promoter of an inclusive and high-performing culture throughout the KPMG network and is a role model for living the KPMG values.

Tola is a member of both the KPMG West Africa Board and the KPMG Africa Board. He currently serves on the Board of LEAP Africa, where he is the Chairman of the Finance Committee and is also a member of the Audit Committee of the

Redeemers University. Tola has lived and worked in the UK, Nigeria and South Africa, and is passionate about accountability and improving standards of education and healthcare in Nigeria. He is a regular speaker on governance, risk management, and the future of the accounting profession.

Tola has very strong leadership and business development skills and is noted for his collaborative and transparent leadership style with emphasis on results. He is a strategic thinker with very strong business, finance and accounting skills demonstrated across a range of competencies including audit, process & control reviews, due diligence, financial reporting and business restructuring.

A clear empathetic people leader, promoter of an inclusive and high-performing culture throughout the KPMG network and a role model for living the KPMG values.

HOLISTIC LIVING

The Holistic Secret to Overcoming Anxiety

By Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri



Anxiety has quietly become one of the most common experiences of modern life. It rarely announces itself with drama. More often, it slips into daily routines through racing thoughts, tight shoulders, restless nights, or a heart that seems to beat faster than usual. Many people describe it as a mental battle, something happening purely in the mind. Yet holistic living reveals a deeper truth: the mind and the body are inseparable partners. When one struggles, the other responds.

Tobi, a vibrant young woman known among her friends for her adventurous spirit and infectious laughter, on the surface, she appeared energetic and confident. She loved discovering new places, meeting people, and saying yes to

life's opportunities. But beneath that lively personality, Tobi carried a quiet and exhausting struggle.

Anxiety often arrived uninvited. Sometimes it appeared in crowded spaces, sometimes before important meetings, and sometimes in the stillness of an ordinary evening. Her heart would race, her palms would sweat, and her thoughts would spiral toward worst-case scenarios. For a long time, Tobi believed something was wrong with her mind. She tried to silence the feelings by pushing harder, thinking more positively, or telling herself to simply "stop overthinking." But the harder she fought her anxiety, the more drained she became.

One morning, after a particularly restless night, Tobi made a decision that changed her perspective. Instead

of fighting her anxiety, she decided to understand it.

She began with something surprisingly simple: movement. Every morning before the city fully woke, she started taking quiet walks. The fresh air, the rhythm of her footsteps, and the gentle calm of early daylight created a small space of peace she had not experienced in months. Within a few weeks, she noticed subtle changes. Her breathing became deeper. Her muscles relaxed. The storms inside her mind softened.

Science confirms what Tobi discovered through experience. Physical movement has a profound effect on anxiety. Exercise releases endorphins, the brain's natural mood enhancers, which help reduce stress and improve emotional balance. It also lowers

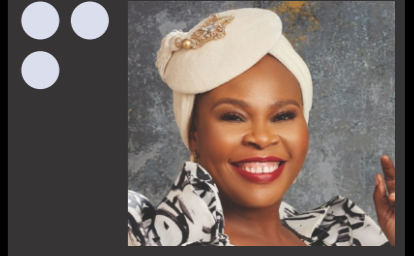
cortisol, the hormone associated with prolonged stress. Even gentle movement—walking, stretching, yoga, or light exercise—can calm the nervous system and bring the body back into equilibrium. Yet holistic living reminds us that physical health goes far beyond movement alone. Nutrition plays an equally powerful role in emotional stability. The brain depends on a steady supply of nutrients to regulate mood and maintain balanced energy levels. Diets rich in whole foods—vegetables, fruits, healthy fats, lean proteins, and whole grains—support optimal brain function. Certain nutrients are particularly beneficial for emotional well-being. Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish, walnuts, and seeds support brain chemistry. Magnesium assists with relaxation and nerve function. B vitamins help regulate neurotransmitters that influence mood.

On the other hand, excessive caffeine and sugar can intensify anxiety by overstimulating the nervous system. When Tobi began paying closer attention to her diet—reducing sugary snacks and limiting late-night caffeine—she noticed another positive shift. Her sleep improved and her energy levels became more stable throughout the day.

Sleep itself became another critical part of her healing journey. Anxiety and sleep share a delicate relationship. When the mind is overwhelmed, restful sleep becomes difficult. Yet without adequate sleep, the brain struggles to regulate emotions effectively. Creating consistent sleep routines—reducing screen exposure before bedtime, maintaining regular sleep hours, and practicing relaxation techniques—can restore the body's natural rhythm and support emotional balance. Another turning point in Tobi's journey came through mindfulness. A trusted mentor introduced her to simple breathing exercises and meditation. Instead of trying to eliminate anxious thoughts, Tobi learned to observe them without judgment. This subtle shift transformed her relationship with anxiety. Rather than seeing it as an enemy, she began to view it as a signal—an invitation to pause, breathe, and care for herself more intentionally.

Mindfulness activates the body's parasympathetic nervous system, often called the "rest and restore" response. Slow breathing and focused awareness reduce heart rate, relax muscles, and quiet the mind. In a world constantly demanding speed and productivity, these moments of stillness can become powerful medicine.

It's important to know that healing rarely happens in isolation. Sharing her experiences with trusted friends helped Tobi break the silence anxiety had created around her. Their encouragement reminded her that she was not alone. For many people, professional support from therapists or counselors can also provide invaluable guidance. When therapy is combined with healthy lifestyle practices such as exercise, nutrition, and mindfulness, the results can be remarkably transformative.



Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri

Psychiatrist-In-Chief at Pinnacle Medical Services

Dr. MAYMUNAH YUSUF KADIRI (aka DR. MAY) popularly referred to as "The Celebrity Shrink," is a multiple award winning Mental Health Physician, Advocate & Coach. She is the convener of "The Mental Health Conference" and the Medical Director and Psychiatrist-In-Chief at Pinnacle Medical Services, Nigeria's leading and foremost Psychology and Mental health clinic prominent in the application of innovative clinical approaches in the management/treatment of a wide range of psychological, emotional, and behavioral related disorders.

Dr. Kadiri is a dynamic Consultant Neuro-Psychiatrist and a Fellow of the National Post Graduate Medical College of Nigeria (FMCPsych) with almost 20 years' experience as a practicing Physician. She is a trained and certified Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavioural Therapist from Albert Ellis Institute, New York, USA. She is also a certified Trauma Counsellor and Neurofeedback Practitioner.

Dr. Kadiri has wide experience in psycho-therapeutic techniques and has perfected her skills whilst in private practice and whilst working for a variety of organizations. She is a recognized radio and television guest Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist. She also contributes to articles published in magazines and newspapers.

She is the only Nigerian with the 14Ps.....Physician, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Practitioner (NLP, BFB, NFB), Public Speaker, Published Author, Producer (movies), Proficient Coach, Parent, Philanthropist, People oriented, Public Health Advocate and Passionate about God and life.

The founder of Pinnacle Health Radio, African's #1 online health radio and a non for profit organization, "Pinnacle Medicals SPEAKOUT Initiative" which is geared towards creating Mental Health literacy in Nigeria and beyond.

The Executive producer of award winning movies, Pepper soup (focused on drug abuse) and Little Drops of Happy (focused on depression, postpartum depression and suicide) and creator of the most innovative mental health app in Africa, HOW BODI.



A Journey Through Traditional Beauty & Flavor


Inside Clay Food Shop & The Henna Place

“Together, Clay Food Shop and The Henna Place offer more than services. They offer belonging. A place where tradition is not just preserved, but honored, elevated, and shared”

Clayfoodshop

Clay Food Shop is more than just a restaurant, it's a cultural experience. Known for its traditional elegance and modern interpretations of Northern Nigerian cuisine, Clay is a destination for food lovers who seek authenticity in every bite.


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The Henna Place

Established in 2014, The Henna Place is Nigeria's leading traditional spa, bringing centuries old Moroccan, Northern Nigeria and Arab beauty rituals into the general wellness market. Specializing in Moroccan hammam treatments, sugar waxing, herbal hair care, and intricate henna designs, the spa provides a deeply relaxing and culturally rich self care experience.

With multiple branches across Nigeria, including three branches in Lagos, The Henna Place has become a go-to destination for brides, beauty lovers, and women seeking intentional, soul-restoring care from head to toe, it's a place to cleanse, unwind, and reconnect with yourself the traditional way.

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