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OMON ODIKE

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Society
THE PEAK PERFORMANCE AFRICA SUMMIT.
The Peak Performance Africa, led by Dr. Abiola Salami, recently hosted the inaugural edition of The Peak Performing (TPP) Woman of The Year event. The purpose of this event was to empower, connect, and honor women across Africa. Held on June 23rd, 2023, the event centered around the theme “Embracing Equity for Peak Performance” and combined three remarkable components: a Summit, Exhibition, and Awards ceremony.

Lifestyle & Fashion
How To Nail The Smart Casual Look
The Complete Guide To Taking Perfect Selfies
Why Pyjama Fashion Is Here To Stay
How To Maximise Natural Light In Your Home
7 Routines For A Perfect Work-Life Balance
Not Sure About Yoga? Here’s Why You Should Give It A Try
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EDITOR’S LETTER
Hello September
Can you believe it? August just zoomed by just like that! I mean, seriously, did anyone hit the fast forward button on time? I’m sitting here wondering how on earth we’ve already nine months deep into the year. It’s like time decided to do the cha-cha, and we’re all just trying to keep up! Anyway, September is here with its “ember” vibes, and that can only mean one thing – the year-end is around the corner!

But you know what? Despite the lightning speed at which this year has flown by, I’m feeling an exciting anticipation in the air. Why, you ask? Well, September happens to be a super special month for me, and I can’t help but share my enthusiasm with all of you. Let’s just say it’s a time for new beginnings, fresh perspectives, and a chance to reflect on achievements thus far. I’ve also got a feeling it’s going to sprinkle a bit of magic on all of us. Whatever it is, let it be a reminder that life is made up of these moments, these cherished memories that make our hearts dance.

Speaking of dancing hearts, how’s everyone doing on their goals for the year? I’ve sensed a collective feeling that this year has been a bit of a challenge for some of us to stay on track. But hey, let’s not beat ourselves up over it. Remember, progress isn’t always linear, and stumbling blocks can often turn into stepping stones.

As the year moves towards its curtain call, there’s still plenty of time to catch up and make those dreams come true. Who knows what opportunities await us in the final chapters of this year’s story? Remember, our happiness and health are all that truly matter at the end of the day. So, let’s focus on that, embrace the remaining months with open arms, and make the most out of every single day. Yup, you heard that right! Balance is the name of the game.

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Distinguished by keynote sessions, fireside chats, networking and mentoring opportunities, and a panel of discourse, the event offered valuable insights and practical guidance for women to excel in their respective fields. The highlight of the event was the awards ceremony, recognizing exceptional women achievers.
SEVEN NIGERIAN CHEFS YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Bukola Amoboye

Forget Jollof rice and Suya—the Nigerian Food scene is a goldmine of flavours, history, and traditions. And guess what? There are chefs who are making sure the world gets a mouthful of this deliciousness. They’re spicing things up and taking Nigerian food global! Here are seven of them you need to know:

Chef Fregz

Mention top Nigerian chefs, and Hubert Fregz, affectionately known as Chef Fregz, is almost always on the tip of the tongue. Beginning his culinary escapade with stints at Oakwood Park and Presta Hotel in 2004, he catapulted his ambitions by setting up his catering service in 2009. A year in Paris, where he earned a diploma from the revered Le Cordon Bleu, only fuelled his fire. Back in Nigeria, Chef Fregz has become a culinary sensation, a judge on popular cooking shows like ‘Knorr Taste Quest,’ and a master of reinventing traditional Nigerian dishes with modern flair.

Chef Stone

Also known as Abiola Akanji, Chef Stone is the visionary behind Red Dish Chronicles—arguably one of Nigeria’s premier culinary schools. After juggling restaurant gigs while studying Business Management at London Metropolitan University, he levelled up by honing his skills at New York’s French Culinary Institute. He’s also made waves in the culinary landscape with ‘The Burgundy,’ a chic fine-dining haven Abuja that opened in 2022.

Chef Muse

Muneera Tahir, widely recognized as Chef Muse, turned her love for cooking from a hobby into a calling. Starting as a pupil at Red Dish Chronicles, she quickly rose through the ranks, securing an internship with L’Italino Restaurant in London and eventually becoming its head chef. A culinary consultant, author, and food stylist, she’s collaborated with high-profile brands, including Coca-Cola, Danpal, and Maggi.

Chef Eros

Tosinlau Egbhome, popularly celebrated as Chef Eros, is a culinary entrepreneur with a flair for elevating Nigerian flavours. Founder of the Cookie Jar Bakery and Le Eros restaurant, helmed off his gastronomic journey selling seasoned chosen to UK students while studying International Business Management. But he’s more than just a chef; he’s a food business guru, recently venturing into the production of spices and other culinary products.

Chef Fatima

Fatima Haruna, or Chef Fatima as she’s fondly called, wears many hats—a professional chef, radio show host, culinary trainer and entrepreneur. With a string of credentials from the State University of New York Global Food Initiative, including Certified Culinary Professional and Masters Certified Food Service Professional, she also conducts training and master classes that inspire a new generation of chefs.

Chef Cupid

Meet Nelson Michael, aka Chef Cupid—the pastry chef who’s taken the food scene by storm without stepping foot in a foreign culinary school. Trained at Red Dish Chronicles and even serving as a facilitator there, Chef Cupid’s culinary journey is anything but ordinary. With a knack for filmmaking, he’s turned his culinary passion into visual art, capturing the imagination of food lovers while nabbing the Baileys Bake Fest crown in 2018.

Chef Alex Oke

As the brains behind XO Boutique Bakery in Victoria Island and an instructor at the Culinary Academy, Alex Oke’s dishes are a beautiful mélange of Nigerian, Asian, and European flavours. Educated at Canada’s Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts and gaining invaluable experience as a chef in Vancouver, Alex returned to Nigeria to set up his boutique bakery that has become a haven for food lovers.

DAN AKPOVWA HOSTS FAREWELL DINNER FOR THE SPANISH CONSUL GENERAL

Recently, Dan Akpovwa, Chairman and Publisher of ThisAbuja Inquirer Newspaper, and his friend, Haruna Jalo-Waziri, CEO of CS93, hosted a Farewell Dinner for Mr. Daniel Losada, the Spanish Consul General who has ended his tour of duty in Nigeria. Mr. Losada is the son of Mr. Angel Losada, a Former Spanish Ambassador to Nigeria. The well-attended event took place at the Capital Club in Victoria Island, Lagos.
12 SKINCARE HACKS YOUR FACIALIST HASN’T TOLD YOU ABOUT.

Many of us turn to professional facials and skincare experts to guide us on this journey, but what if we told you that there are these little-known secrets can elevate your skincare routine to the next level and help you unlock your skin’s true potential. Get ready to discover the 12 game-changing skincare tips that are about to revolutionise your beauty regimen!

The Power of Double Cleansing

While you might be familiar with cleansing, did you know that double cleansing – using an oil-based cleanser followed by a water-based one – can effectively remove makeup, sunscreen, and impurities that a single cleanse might miss? This two-step technique can lead to a clearer and more balanced complexion.

Hydration Beyond Moisturisers

Your facialist might have recommended moisturisers, but have they told you about the magic of hyaluronic acid serums? These lightweight, deeply hydrating serums can lock in moisture and plump up your skin, reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

The Lesser-Known Exfoliants

Glycolic and salicylic acids are common exfoliants, but have you heard of lactic or mandelic acids? These gentler exfoliants can refine your skin texture without causing irritation, leaving you with a smoother canvas.

Steam Your Way to Glowing Skin

While steam during facials is relaxing, incorporating a facial steamer into your routine at home can open up your pores and enhance the absorption of serums and masks, giving you that post-facial glow every day.

The Wonders of Facial Massage

Beyond the basic facial routine, facial massage techniques can promote blood circulation and lymphatic drainage, reducing puffiness and sculpting your features over time.

Sunscreens for All Occasions

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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO TAKING PERFECT SELFIES

Thanks to social media, the selfie has become more than just a photograph. It has become a reflection of our personality, mood, and the moments we cherish. However, snapping the perfect selfie isn’t as simple as it seems. From lighting to angles and even a touch of self-confidence, there’s an art to it that anyone can master.

**Focus and Framing**

While filters can be fun, a light touch is key. Subtle enhancements can elevate your selfie without making it look overly edited. Adjust brightness, contrast, and saturation to enhance the photo’s natural beauty. Remember, your goal is to enhance, not transform.
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OMON ODIKE
Championing Youth Empowerment

With over 20 years of diverse experience ranging from legal practice to HR consulting, Omon Odike’s journey is an inspiration in itself. As the CEO and Managing Consultant of U-Connect Human Resources Limited, one of Nigeria’s foremost HR Solutions Companies, she has steered the company’s growth at an astounding rate of over 100% annually. But her impact doesn’t stop there. Omon’s brainchild, Gr8jobsng, Africa’s pioneering digital HR recruitment platform, stands as a testament to her innovative spirit. Beyond accolades and recognition, Omon’s true passion lies in youth empowerment and employability enhancement. Having placed over 20,000 jobseekers in diverse local and international firms, she continues to bridge the gap between potential and opportunity. Her dedication extends to training and upskilling initiatives, collaborating with global partners like the UN Global Impact and aligning corporates to drive her vision. A multi-tasker, she is also the host of “Omon’s Couch,” a captivating YouTube talk show where she ignites the spark of entrepreneurship and imparts wisdom to professionals, helping them flourish in their careers.

Your career journey has seen a transition from legal practice to HR consulting. What pivotal moment influenced this shift and led you to become the CEO of U-Connect Human Resources Limited?

The momentous shift from a thriving legal practice to spearheading a prominent HR Company was not an elective decision but a compelling necessity that arose from the intricate balance between professional commitments and the pursuit of building a fulfilling family life. This pivotal juncture was marked by a compelling realization that the pressures and demands inherent in legal practice conflicted with my aspirations of nurturing a harmonious family life.

As an ambitious and driven individual, I grappled with the desire to excel in my legal career while also tending to the responsibilities of a growing family. The aspiration for work-life equilibrium prompted me to take a transformative step - the leadership role at U-Connect Human Resources Limited. At the time, this move offered the prospect of achieving a better equilibrium between personal and professional obligations, with the anticipation that I could direct more time and energy towards my family.

Regrettably, the transition to the helm of U-Connect presented a reality distinct from my expectations. As I discovered, the realm of entrepreneurship in Nigeria was far from the envisioned oasis of leisure and family-focused time. Instead, it unravelled as an arena of formidable challenges, where entrepreneurial demands intersected with the intricate landscape of managing a family.

Despite these unforeseen challenges, this transition unfolded as more than just a change in professional trajectory. It evolved into a profound realisation of my life's purpose - one that transcended my legal background and ventured into the realm of HR consulting. This newfound path provided an avenue to make an indelible impact on lives through innovative employment and employability initiatives. It became evident that the decision to delve into HR consulting was a manifestation of destiny. With each stride forward, the corridors of U-Connect opened up new horizons, allowing me to运用 my legal background and ventured into the realm of HR consulting. This newfound path provided an avenue to make an indelible impact on lives through innovative employment and employability initiatives. It became evident that the decision to delve into HR consulting was a manifestation of destiny.

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With the transition to the helm of U-Connect, the company’s growth at an astounding rate of over 100% annually. But her impact doesn’t stop there. Omon’s brainchild, Gr8jobsng, Africa’s pioneering digital HR recruitment platform, stands as a testament to her innovative spirit. Beyond accolades and recognition, Omon’s true passion lies in youth empowerment and employability enhancement. Having placed over 20,000 jobseekers in diverse local and international firms, she continues to bridge the gap between potential and opportunity. Her dedication extends to training and upskilling initiatives, collaborating with global partners like the UN Global Impact and aligning corporates to drive her vision. A multi-tasker, she is also the host of “Omon’s Couch,” a captivating YouTube talk show where she ignites the spark of entrepreneurship and imparts wisdom to professionals, helping them flourish in their careers.

So it really wasn’t an easy transition?

No. Transitioning from legal practice to running an HR Company was far from easy. In fact, it was anything but easy. Leaving the familiarity of legal practice, I found myself without a clear direction and lacking relevant skills for the new path. Those initial six months were marked by tears and uncertainty as I grappled with doubts, even yearning to return to my legal roots. The feeling of being lost and unsure of my decisions was overwhelming, and the thought of making a huge mistake haunted me.

Amidst this struggle, a certain encounter became a turning point. It ignited a realization that I had indeed made the right choice, prompting me to surrender control and seek divine guidance. Placing my trust in God, I implied for blessings upon my business. Miraculously, that cry was heard and answered. From that moment on, I felt a sustaining presence, an assurance that I was not alone on this uncharted journey.

To get a grip on my new role, I embarked on a journey of relentless self-training, exhaustive research, and on-the-job learning. This was my steep learning curve, a path carved through perseverance and resilience. Slowly, I began to grasp the intricacies of running a business and started to define the direction I wanted to take the company. This journey was marked by uphill battles, but it also symbolized triumph over adversity. It’s a testament to the power of faith, determination, and the relentless pursuit of growth. The transformation from a lawyer to a trailblazing HR Entrepreneur was marked by my willingness to learn, the courage to adapt, and the faith to let go and trust the process.

The company's growth rate has been impressive, boasting leading International and Multinational clients. What strategies have you implemented to make this possible?

The remarkable growth rate of U-Connect, accompanied by its association with esteemed international and multinational clients, has been achieved through a blend of strategic approaches. A client-centric philosophy lies at the core, ensuring a deep understanding of their unique needs and challenges. This is coupled with a commitment to innovation, allowing the company to adapt and evolve its services in response to changing market demands. Emphasis on quality, excellence, precision and consistently high service delivery standards has cultivated a reputation that resonates with top-tier clients. Strategic partnerships with industry leaders and institutions have expanded the company’s reach and brought cutting-edge technologies to the forefront.

At U-Connect, our distinctive approach is to offer services and VALUE to our customers. Recognizing the saturation of similar services in the market, we focus on delivering a superior and enriched experience to our clients, setting us apart. Also, the technology is the backbone of our operations as most of our processes are driven or enabled by cutting-edge technology, ensuring efficiency and aligning with the demands of the modern world.

Finally, offering a comprehensive suite of services, community engagement initiatives, thought leadership activities and a focus on continuous improvement have collectively contributed to attracting and retaining a roster of international and multinational clients.

With over 20,000 jobseekers placed, which
success story stands out as a testament to U-Connect’s impact? Within the first six months of establishing U-Connect, I encountered a truly unforgettable experience. This transpired during the initial phase when I began running the company. At that point, I had ventured into recruiting, and you know, during the early days, you are the MD, treasurer, accountant, and all, and had a small recruitment brief from a client. During this period, I successfully placed ten individuals into positions with a client. Yet, despite the outward appearance of success, I grappled with lingering uncertainties. The decision to transition from my prior job and establish an HR company was significant, and moments of doubt surfaced. It was during one of those contemplative times that something remarkable occurred. After conducting interviews and making decisions, one of the candidates contacted me via text message. This proved to be a profound turning point. The candidate conveyed his sincere appreciation in words that dripped with gratitude and emotion. He framed me as someone who had changed not only his life but also the lives of his family members. The job I had secured for him meant more than just employment; it meant sustainability, security, and hope. The very act of providing for his family’s needs through the opportunity I presented moved him to tears. This heartfelt message served as a transformative revelation. It illuminated the impact my work as an entrepreneur had on real people’s lives. It was an affirmation that my decision to establish U-Connect was aligned with a greater purpose. This interaction resonated deeply within me, igniting a renewed determination to pour myself wholeheartedly into the business.

Let’s also talk about Gr8jobsng: the concept is quite innovative. Did you face any challenges introducing a digital HR recruitment platform to the African market? Absolutely, launching came with its fair share of challenges. The concept of a digital recruitment platform was relatively new in the region, presenting various obstacles that needed to be addressed. Shifting mindsets and behaviors posed one of the key challenges. Traditional recruitment methods were deeply ingrained, making it essential to educate stakeholders about the benefits of a digital approach; convincing them to embrace this new paradigm required dedicated efforts and costs to overcome skepticism and demonstrate the platform’s effectiveness.

Furthermore, technological readiness and infrastructure disparities were significant hurdles. While digital adoption was on the rise, varying access to technology and the internet needed careful consideration. Ensuring that the platform was accessible and usable by a diverse user base demanded creative solutions. Building credibility in a market where digital recruitment was nascent presented another obstacle. Gaining the trust of both jobseekers and employers for such a critical process required robust validation and establishing a strong reputation.

Additionally, the lack of local technical expertise to build the platform led to the involvement of international developers. While this step was necessary, it incurred substantial costs that strained the company’s liquidity. Despite these challenges, the innovative nature of Gr8jobsng represented an opportunity and interest. As the platform showcased its effectiveness, positive word-of-mouth and success stories contributed to building its reputation.

Hosting over 55 career fairs is impressive. What role do these events play in bridging the gap between job seekers and employers, particularly in a dynamic market like Nigeria?

Hosting and collaborating on over 55 career fairs was indeed an impressive feat for U-Connect & Gr8jobsng. These events played a pivotal role in bridging the gap between job seekers and employers, especially in a dynamic market like Nigeria. Generally speaking, career fairs serve as essential platforms for connecting job seekers with potential employers. They provide a unique opportunity for direct interaction, allowing jobseekers to showcase their skills, qualifications, and aspirations face-to-face. This personal connection goes beyond what a resume can convey. It enables employers to gauge candidates holistically.

Youth empowerment is a central theme in your work. What inspired you to focus on upskilling initiatives and employability training for the Nigerian youth?

Indeed, my emphasis on youth employability in Nigeria, particularly through upskilling initiatives and employability training, stems from a pressing need to address the challenges of bridging the gap between the growing demands of employers and the shortage of young, employable talent.

The job market landscape is rapidly evolving, and as companies expand and industries diversify, the demand for skilled talent is consistently on the rise. However, a significant disparity often exists between the skills possessed by young individuals and the skills sought after by employers. This gap has reached a critical level, with youth unemployment or underemployment in Nigeria, and this gap has widened in the last three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the tech space.

I was inspired to take action by recognizing the mismatch between employers’ needs and young job seekers’ capabilities. By focusing on upskilling initiatives and employability training, I sought to address this critical issue head-on. I realized that empowering young people with the right skills, knowledge, and training enhances their chances of securing employment and empowers them to thrive and excel in their chosen fields.

Through targeted training programs, both online and in-person, I aimed to provide young people with practical skill sets, and industry-specific knowledge that employers are actively seeking. This strategic approach not only benefits jobseekers by making them more employable but also benefits employers by supplying them with a pool of talent that aligns with their requirements.

With your extensive experience, what trends do you foresee in the Nigerian job industry in the next few years, especially concerning the evolving role of technology and social media?

I believe the evolving role of technology and social media is expected to significantly drive the trends likely to shape the Nigerian employment industry in the coming years. From the adoption of digital solutions in recruitment to the emphasis on employee experience and work-life balance, these trends reflect the industry’s dynamic nature. The focus on upskilling and reskilling is particularly crucial as technology continues to reshape job roles and demands.

Additionally, the growing importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the expansion of the gig economy and freelancing will further define the changing nature of work and the need for adaptable approaches. The emphasis on employee well-being is a welcome development, acknowledging the importance of creating supportive and balanced work environments.

Overall, there is a need for both job seekers and employers to embrace these trends to navigate the changing landscape successfully.

Your Talk Show, “Omon’s Couch,” recently launched. Could you share the driving force behind this initiative?

“Omon’s Couch” was born from a deep inspiration to empower, encourage, and provide valuable insights to entrepreneurs and professionals of all generations. This initiative emerged from my unwavering commitment to extend meaningful impact beyond my professional pursuits. The core objective is to provide a platform where guests share their inspiring stories, shedding light on their career or entrepreneurial journeys. By imparting practical advice, ideas, lessons learned, and keys to their achievements, I aim to cultivate a wellspring of wisdom. “Omon’s Couch” aims to be a trusted reservoir of guidance for both building and established entrepreneurs, guiding them through the dynamic business realm.

As an individual with extensive experience spanning entrepreneurship, law, and HR consulting, I acknowledge the transformative potential of sharing narratives, knowledge, and perspectives. Establishing a space where a wide audience can access practical advice, insights, and lessons from my journey and those of my esteemed guests was a pivotal aspiration.

Entrepreneurship and career talk shows are gaining popularity. What unique elements does your show bring to the table, and how do you plan to expand its reach?

Absolutely, the rise of entrepreneurship and career talk shows is noticeable. What sets “Omon’s Couch” apart is its distinct focus on entrepreneurship and career insights, particularly in a space with limited presence.

My show is unique because it’s a platform where entrepreneurs and professionals of all ages can gather to gain practical knowledge. I make sure to share real stories, useful tips, and lessons learned that can truly benefit the audience. The conversations are relatable, and the advice is down-to-earth, making it easy for viewers to understand and apply to their own lives.

Moreover, my extensive experience in entrepreneurship, law, and HR consulting brings depth to the discussions. I share my journey and bring in accomplished guests who have excelled in their fields. This blend of personal experiences and diverse perspectives creates a well-rounded learning experience.

To expand the reach of “Omon’s Couch,” I am actively leveraging social media platforms and digital channels to connect with a broader audience. I am also exploring collaborations and partnerships to expand the show’s visibility and reach.

Furthermore, I’m looking into innovative formats and topics that resonate with current trends and the needs of my audience. This keeps the show relevant and engaging.

Could you share a memorable piece of advice from one of your guests that profoundly impacted your audience?

Don’t focus on the opportunities within the problem.” - Tara Duntsoy.

Balancing a full-time HR job, a YouTube channel, family, and a social life sounds quite demanding. How do you manage your time effectively?

Being an entrepreneur has brought about significant impacts in my life in general. I’ve had to juggle time and responsibilities, diving deep into work and an hour break. Over the years, I have developed a habit of reining my brainstorming tasks for late at night when the surroundings are serene and everyone is asleep. Balancing work and personal life can be challenging, necessitating meticulous prioritization and effective time management. However, this balance has become more manageable as my children have grown older.

Despite the passage of time, time constraints remain a consideration. Juggling business responsibilities with family commitments can be a balancing act. This aspect has prompted me to refine my time management strategies. By prioritizing tasks, allocating specific time blocks, planning my day ahead, delegating when possible, setting boundaries, and ensuring self-care, I have made significant progress in this area.

Flexibility is key when it comes to managing the dynamic aspects of balancing my time. By focusing on quality rather than quantity and regularly reviewing my commitments, I navigate these responsibilities with ease and efficiency.

What role does networking play in your HR career, and how has social media contributed to expanding your professional connections?

Networking is pivotal in my HR career, serving as a multifaceted tool that drives business growth, fosters continuous knowledge expansion, and aids in establishing partnerships with industry professionals within and beyond my immediate sphere. I’ve been able to tap into a wealth of insights, innovative practices, and diverse perspectives that enrich my understanding of the ever-evolving HR landscape.

Furthermore, networking has proven to be instrumental in expanding the reach of my business endeavours. Building relationships with fellow entrepreneurs and professionals has opened doors to collaboration, strategic partnerships, and new opportunities. These connections have been instrumental in driving the growth of my company and solidifying its position as a trailblazer in the HR consulting industry.

What’s one key piece of advice you’d offer young women aiming to excel in their professional HR roles and personal lives?

Cultivate a strong sense of authenticity and confidence. In HR, authenticity is key. It’s important to build trust and credibility among colleagues, clients, and team members. Strive to lead with authenticity, honesty, and genuine commitment to making a positive impact.

Similarly, when developing your personal brand online, authenticity remains paramount. Present yourself in a way that reflects your true values, passions, and experiences. Strive to align your online presence with your professional identity, ensuring that your digital footprint accurately represents who you are and what you stand for.

Omone’s Couch was born from a deep aspiration to inspire, empower, and offer valuable insights to entrepreneurs and professionals of all ages and backgrounds. This initiative emerged from my unwavering commitment to extending meaningful impact beyond my professional pursuits.
HOW TO NAIL THE SMART CASUAL LOOK

Struggling to decode the mystery of “smart casual” attire? You’re not alone! Dress too fancy, and you’ll stick out; too laid-back, and you look unprepared. Gone are the days when it was either suits or jeans; today’s fashion landscape demands a harmonious blend of sophistication and comfort. But don’t worry, we’ve cracked the code. Keep reading for simple tips that will have you looking effortlessly stylish for any event.

Start with the Basics
Building a strong foundation is key. Begin with well-fitting neutral-coloured chinos or tailored slacks. These versatile bottoms serve as a canvas for your outfit, giving you room to experiment with the top half.

Polished Tops
Smart casual is about finding equilibrium. Pair your classic bottoms with a well-ironed, button-down shirt in a muted tone. Keep patterns subtle and avoid overly flashy accessories. A crisp white shirt or a soft-hued pastel one can add a touch of elegance without sacrificing comfort.

Layering Know-How
Mastering layering is the secret sauce of smart casual. A lightweight blazer can instantly elevate your ensemble. Opt for unstructured blazers that offer a relaxed silhouette while maintaining a refined look. Throw it on over your button-down for an effortlessly stylish vibe.

Footwear Finesse
Shoes can make or break your outfit. Leave the sneakers for the gym and embrace loafers or heels. These shoes bridge the gap between formal and casual, striking the right balance for a smart casual outfit.

Denim Dynamics
Yes, denim can be part of smart casual! Opt for well-fitted, dark-wash jeans with minimal distressing. Pair them with a tailored blazer and a tucked-in shirt for a trendy yet sophisticated ensemble.

Accessories Amplify
Accessories inject personality into your attire. A simple leather belt, a classic wristwatch, or a tasteful pocket square can go a long way. Remember, less is more – one or two carefully chosen accessories are enough to complete the look.

Mindful Grooming
Your grooming routine is as important as your outfit. Keep your hair neat, your beard trimmed, and your shoes polished. The devil is in the details, and immaculate grooming can elevate even the simplest outfit.

Confidence is Key
The most crucial element of any outfit is confidence. Wear your smart casual outfit with pride, and you’ll naturally exude an air of sophistication that goes beyond mere clothing.

Know the Occasion
While smart casual is versatile, it’s essential to consider the event or location. What’s acceptable at a relaxed dinner might not fly at a formal office meeting. Always gauge the context before finalizing your outfit.

Personal Flair
Tailor the look to your personality. Whether it’s a unique tie, a statement accessory, or a hint of colour incorporating your personal style is the final touch that makes the outfit truly yours.
NOT SURE ABOUT YOGA? HERE’S WHY YOU SHOULD GIVE IT A TRY.

Yoga isn’t just a fad; it’s a lifestyle that has transcended borders and continents, finding its way into the hustle and bustle of Lagos. A union of mind and body, yoga offers a plethora of benefits that might just transform your life. Still on the fence? Here are some reasons why you should absolutely grab a mat:

By Bukola Amoboye

Unlock Flexibility & Balance
Say goodbye to stiffness. Yoga stretches you in ways you didn’t know were possible, enhancing your balance and clarity of thought.

Sculpt & Strengthen
Your core, back, arms, legs—you name it. Yoga works out all these muscle groups, making it a cornerstone of your fitness regime.

Low-Key Fitness
Want to stay fit without panting on the treadmill? Yoga’s got you covered.

Blood Flow Boost
Yoga invigorates your blood circulation, sending that sweet oxygen everywhere it’s needed.

Stress Begone
If life’s got you in a stranglehold, yoga offers a sanctuary where you can cultivate this newfound passion in Lagos.

1. The Yoga Spot: Situated in the heart of Victoria Island, this gem offers something for everyone. Want to be part of a yoga tribe? Join their Saturday group sessions. Crave one-on-one guidance? They do that, too! But heads up—booking in advance is a must!

2. Pro-Fit: Nestled in Ikoyi, this is not just a gym; it’s a wellness hub! With a sauna, state-of-the-art equipment, and super-savvy trainers, Pro-Fit will turn you into a yoga pro before you know it.

3. Madoka Yoga Wellbeing Initiative: Calling all seniors, juniors, and everyone in between! Madoka’s tailor-made classes for all life stages and even grooms the next generation of yoga instructors—a complete yoga experience.

4. Viprin: Walk in tense, walk out zen. With their expert trainers, Viprin promises a transformative experience whether you’re a novice or a yogi pro.

5. House of Zen: Nestled in the lap of Victoria Island, the ambience here is already half the therapy. Choose from an array of therapeutic yoga styles, and let’s not forget—they offer heavenly massages too!

6. Yogshivir: Walk in tense, walk out zen. With their expert trainers, Yogshivir promises a transformative experience whether you’re a novice or a yogi pro.

7. 7 Routines for a Perfect Work-Life Balance

BY FUNKE BABS KUFEDI

Ah, 7 p.m. on a Friday, and you’re still staring at that blinking cursor, aren’t you? Your to-do list is more like a “today’s events”-lookat-me list, and your inbox? Let’s not go there. Don’t worry. You’ve not the only one caught in this tug-of-war between desk duty and sofa time. The good news? Work-life balance isn’t a unicorn; it’s more like a trainable puppy. Here’s how to train yours with seven simple, life-changing habits.

The Miracle Morning Routine
Remember, your morning sets the tone for the entire day. Start with a splash of cold water on your face, a brisk 5-minute jog, or some quick yoga stretches. Follow it up with a healthy breakfast and perhaps some meditation. This “Miracle Morning Routine” will not only pump you up for the day but also provide a clear demarcation between your home life and work responsibilities.

Priorities Like a Pro
Not all tasks are created equal. Use the Eisenhower Box—a simple four-quadrant box that helps you decide on and prioritize tasks by urgency and importance. Anything that is neither urgent nor important? Delegate it or toss it out of your mental window. This will free up time for activities that rejuvenate you, like reading, cooking, or spending time with loved ones.

Timed Work Bursts: The Pomodoro Technique
Named after the Italian word for “tomato” (after a tomato-shaped kitchen timer its inventor used), the Pomodoro Technique calls for 25-minute bursts of concentrated work followed by a 5-minute break. After four cycles, take a longer break. These intervals can help keep your mind fresh and focused while streamlining burnout.

Weekly Review and Look-Ahead
Sunday evenings are perfect for this. Spend 30 minutes reviewing the past week and planning the next one. What worked well for you? What could you improve? Make a to-do list for the week ahead and set your goals. Not only does this instil a sense of accomplishment, but it also frees up mental space, allowing you to enjoy your off-time fully.

Digital Detox Hour
While tech tools are indispensable for modern work, they’re also the most common culprits in blurring the lines between our professional and personal lives. Designate an hour before bedtime as your Digital Detox Hour. No emails, no work calls—just you and perhaps a good book or some calming music.

Take ‘Microbreaks’ for Macro Results
A simple 5-minute break to walk around, do some light stretching, or even gaze out of the window can work wonders for your productivity and well-being. Researchers have found that frequent short breaks are more beneficial than fewer longer ones. So, don’t forget to breathe in between those emails.

Not Sure About Yoga? Here’s Why You Should Give It a Try.
WHY PYJAMA FASHION IS HERE TO STAY

Hey, Fashion Lovers! Ever considered stepping out in your PJs? No, we’re not talking about a late-night grocery run. We mean making a glam statement in pyjama-inspired fashion! If you haven’t caught on to this cozy-yet-chic trend, here are some irresistible reasons to get on board.

Snug as a Bug, Stylish as a Diva

Let’s face it: Who doesn’t want to be comfy and look fab at the same time? With pyjama fashion, it’s like wearing a hug! Soft fabrics meet chic designs so you can strut your stuff in cloud-like comfort.

Zero Effort, Full Glam

Picture this: You wake up, roll out of bed, and are already the most stylish person in the room. Okay, it’s not that simple, but it’s close! With their breezy cuts and fine details, PJs go from breakfast to boardroom to bar in no time. Yup, we said it—PJs in the boardroom!

Mix, Match, and Slay!

The best thing about pyjama fashion? Versatility is its middle name. Rock that silk PJ top with high-waist jeans for a casual day out, or pair it with sleek trousers for work. Add a chunky necklace and heels to that PJ set, and you’re evening-out ready! The style possibilities are endless, darling.

Old-School Glam, New-School Cool

Picture the Hollywood glam of the ‘30s and ‘40s, but make it 2023! Pyjama fashion takes us on a nostalgic trip while keeping things totally now. Think of it as borrowing a cup of elegance from Audrey Hepburn while still channeling your inner Tiwa Savage.

Your Style, Your Rules

Love flamingo prints? Crazy about neon? The pyjama trend says, “Bring it on!” It’s all about flaunting your unique style. Go bold, go subtle—just go you!

So, are you ready to give your wardrobe a comfy, stylish PJ makeover? Trust us, once you go pyjama chic, you’ll wonder how you ever lived without it!

HOW TO MAXIMISE NATURAL LIGHT IN YOUR HOME

Aside from saving on energy bills, there are several other reasons why you should design your living space with an allowance for adequate natural light to stream in. Studies have shown that natural light in your home can improve mood and productivity. It can also help to reduce stress and anxiety. So, instead of filling up with artificial lights, let’s show you how to let a little bit more sun in.

Sparkling Windows

Here’s an easy fix—clean those windows! Dust and grime can dim your rooms by blocking out the sun. A regular wipe-down can work wonders.

Reflective Decor

Glossy furniture and metallic tiles aren’t just chic; they’re your new best friends for amplifying light. Reflective surfaces catch and redistribute sunlight, making your space feel brighter and larger.

Sky’s the Limit with Skylights

Ready for a game-changer? Install skylights! They’re like windows to heaven, letting in heaps of natural light. Plus, you’ll get to sleep under the stars—talk about dreamy.

Pocket-Friendly Sun Tubes

Want the skylight effect but on a budget? Say hello to Sun Tubes. These affordable little wonders channel sunlight right into your room. And if you add a few of these to your ceiling, you’re not missing out on much compared to traditional skylights.

White Paint

Want to brighten your home effortlessly? Start with a canvas of white walls and ceilings. While darker hues might make your space feel like a snug little cocoon, they also absorb all the light—and we want to keep that sunshine flowing! Opt for white or lighter neutrals to amp up the radiance.

Avoid blocking your windows

It’s simple—keep your windows clear of obstructions! Don’t let furniture or knickknacks hog the window area; you want those sunbeams to come streaming in unhindered.

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

Use the magic of mirrors to double up on daylight. Position a gorgeous mirror across from or adjacent to a window and watch how it captures the sunlight and scatters it cheerfully around the room.

Light Curtains

Ditch the heavy drapes! Lighter, gauzy curtains not only look ethereal, but they also let in oodles of light. Think whites, creams, or light pastels.

By Bukola Amoboye
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