

FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Spicing the Leadership Experience

By Dr. David Oginde, PhD

Board an *Airlink* flight recently, my attention was caught by an article titled *Mentoring is Good for Business* carried in their in-flight magazine *SkyWays*. The author, Catherine Hodgson, made the powerful observation that mentorship is the way of the future for organizations that want to ensure sustainability. Organisations that do not offer mentorship may not only find it more difficult to grow, but also challenging to attract the right talent or fill its leadership pipeline. I couldn't agree more.

In my short leadership journey, I have found that there are many of us who have great latent potential to be highly successful leaders. Some even get opportunities to become leaders at various levels in the community, corporate, or public sectors. We often take such opportunities with great zeal and passion to fulfill our mandate. Whereas some have delivered on the promise, several have struggled, while others have performed dismally. Reason – they just did not know what to do.

It is often wrongly assumed that an astute professional will automatically make a great leader. Not quite. The skillset required, say to be an excellent accountant, are completely different from those needed to lead a thriving large accounting enterprise. Thus, a successful



accountant needs to be nurtured into becoming a leader in a top-tier accounting firm. This calls for an intentional mentorship program.

A good mentorship program should sharpen the mind, open the eyes, skill the hands, and nimble the feet. According to *Forbes 2019*, one of the most impressive things about an effective mentoring program is how far the positive ripple effects reach. Mentoring benefits the organisation by improving job satisfaction and retention, and aids in personal and professional development of the mentee. A study by *Sun Microsystems* reports that mentees are promoted five times more than those not in any such program. Furthermore, according to *Accountemps*, 96% of executives say mentoring is an important development tool and 75% say mentoring played a key role in their career growth and development.

That is why at *The Catallead* we have positioned ourselves as catalysts for wholistic leadership development. We are

focused on grooming and mentoring executives to deliver on their mandate and nurture them to become high impact leaders that transform not only their organisations but society at large.

Our two flagship programs, the *High Impact Leader* and the *Cutting-Edge Leader*, are group mentorship programs designed to equip leaders with practical tools for high impact leadership. Unlike ad hoc leadership workshops, these programs ensure that participants develop their leadership skills in a very systematic and practical manner. The idea is to make learning simple and practical but rooted on strong foundational theories of leadership. Set in the context of peers from diverse sectors – banking, NGO, judiciary, government, religious, finance, etc – there is a consistent infusion of knowledge, cross pollination of ideas, and honest sharing of experiences that is truly life transforming. It has been deeply heartening to receive feedback from many of the participants on how their lives and leadership have been transformed. A senior HR Manager recently told me, “I have participated in many leadership programs, but this is the most practical and life transforming leadership program I have ever attended.” Another participant commented, “This has totally transformed my life and leadership. People have been asking me in the office what has happened to me.” A pastor quipped, “I wish I knew these things years ago. I have squandered so many opportunities!”

At *The Catallead* mentorship is all about spicing the leadership experience. We are in total agreement with Hodgson that mentoring is not just a fad or nice to have; it is a must have for any organisation that wants to survive. We spice it up. ■

Join the journey!



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2023 HIGHLIGHTS

This year has been nothing short of incredible with various engagements we had across the year.

1. Programs

The High Impact Leadership Series

You probably have heard of our famous **High Impact Leadership Series** where we talk all about Self-leadership. Throughout 2023 we had the pleasure of journeying with 9 Cohorts of leaders. Picture this: a mix of leaders from Private sector, Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and encompassing different industries and sectors. It was such an exciting experience for our participants to also find a community of diverse leaders through this program.

The Cutting-Edge Leadership Program

The **CEL Program** is what we'd call the 'new kid in the block' as we launched on 27th October this year. Here, conversations are more about leading others i.e. teams, organizations and becoming the leader that leads the future. The launch was filled with a burst of warmth and the joy of reconnecting with our **HIL Series alumni**.

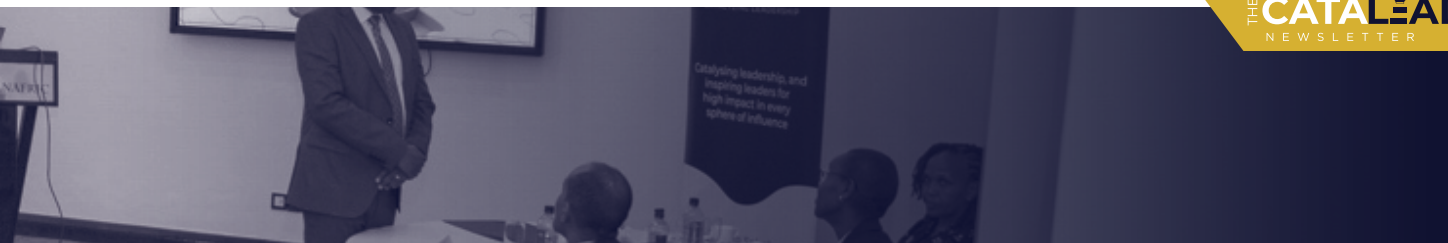
2. Consultancies

Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF)

– Our engagement with MBF was nothing short of heartwarming to see firsthand the work that medical practitioners and other hospital workers put in for their communities. We had the pleasure of training the surgical network leaders, nurses and senior hospital administrators from 5 different hospitals based in Tumutumu and Chogoria in Kenya & Ekwendeni, Embangweni and Mzuzu in Malawi.

Children's Mission Africa – What an amazing opportunity this was to empower senior leaders of CMA's partner organizations spanning 10 African countries. Together, we delved into discussions on board and governance, transitional leadership, and transformational leadership that truly inspires and sparks positive change in organizations and communities.





Henry Jackson Foundation – Medical Research International – A compelling week-long training that immersed mid-level managers in discussions of enhancing individual leadership competencies and strategic management of their teams. This wasn't just a training; it was a journey of growth and development, nurturing leadership qualities that go beyond the professional realm and touch the core of who the leaders are.

Compassion International – A gathering of the Africa regional leadership team and national directors who came together to explore and embrace the profound impact of self-leadership. This was a shared journey of self-discovery, a deep dive into understanding how the power of leading oneself can create a ripple effect of positive change.



3. Partnerships

On the 1st of November this year, we joyfully sealed the deal on our partnership with the **Institute of Human Resource Management**. This collaboration is a commitment to becoming catalysts for effective and excellent leadership among HR professionals in diverse organizations. Together, we're embarking on a journey that goes beyond partnership—it's a shared mission to nurture outstanding leaders in the space of Human Resources.

Our inaugural engagement under the **CATALEAD & IHRM partnership** was The High Impact Leadership training held from 4th-7th Dec. 2023 at Sawela Lodges, Naivasha. We were privileged to equip HR practitioners from across different organizations and sectors to reflect on the critical importance of personal leadership as a key contributor to successful leadership in human resource management. ■



Testimonials



Francis **Ugango**

Partner – Crowe Erastus & Co.

“**The High Impact Leader Series** has helped me discover the importance of self-mastery. The nuggets of information and lessons from the series have clarified and made me realize my purpose and vision. It has given me practical insights on how to navigate leading me and made me a calmer person in any environment. It is a strong foundation to build and realize my self-leadership every moment.”

Bernice **Gicovi**

HR Practitioner & Certified Professional Mediator

“Every one of us has leadership acumen that has to be brought out - catalyzed. That is what **CATALEAD** helped me clarify and hence step out in confidence, to fulfill my life’s calling. Personal leadership is leading yourself, even when you have no job title. It also helped me clarify my vision and I have been able to make a very critical decision on my future. I have been able to clearly develop my road map on where I am going (Vision) and I feel confident to launch out into my next level-and not afraid to fail because I am not competing with others but keeping to my lane.”



Brian **Mbugua**

**CEO – World Hope Int’l Kenya
Senior Pastor – Hope Church Lavington,**

“Leadership is like a fast-paced race that is complex and demanding. Every leader needs a pit stop, a place they can slow down and get refueled or catalysed for greater effectiveness and impact. This is exactly what The **CATALEAD** has been for me.”



SECTION 4



**ASSOCIATE
SPOTLIGHT**

Dr. Jane Maina, MBCHB, MA

1. Thank you for taking the time and allowing us to get to know you and learn from you. So, tell us a bit about who Dr. Jane is...

Well, hello there! I'm Dr. Jane Maina. First and foremost, Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. My background professionally has been in Medicine and Anesthesia, which I pursued at Degree and Master's level respectively from the University of Nairobi and practiced medicine for almost 30 years. I later went on to pursue my 2nd Masters in Clinical Psychology at the United States International University (USIU)-Africa and I would say it's been quite a journey!

2. 30 years! That is quite an expansive career in Medicine. How did this career journey then lead you into the field of mental health?

During my tenure as a doctor, the profound suffering endured by my patients and their families became increasingly apparent. This realization prompted me to delve into research on Prevention Medicine. Throughout this exploration, the undeniable connection between stress, physical illness, and mental health disorders became evident. As I approached retirement from my role as an Anesthetist, I made a deliberate choice to pursue Psychology as my second career. The aim was to contribute to enhancing people's mental health and well-being.

3. In our program, "The High Impact Leadership Series," we address the aspect of mental health as a critical entity in self-leadership. Tell us a little about the intersection between the two.

First and foremost, when we talk of mental health we are referring to a state of well-being where individuals recognize and realize their abilities, cope effectively with life's normal stresses, work productively, and contribute to their communities. We therefore equip our participants with information around mental health, self-care strategies and most importantly on self-awareness as this is critical for self leadership.

4. Would you then say that mental health should be a priority for the development of leaders, teams, and organizations?

Absolutely! It is crucial to prioritize mental health in our spaces because a mentally healthy workforce not only fosters consistent team bonding but also contributes to creating a supportive and safe environment for every person. Consequently, you will have a team that is more committed to their work and increased performance and productivity amongst many other benefits experienced from individual level to organizational level.

5. In your experience, what mental health challenges have you observed in the workplace, and what steps do you think leaders can take to create a supportive environment for their team members?

At the workplace, we have observed common challenges such as stress, burnout, anxiety, strained work relationships, conflicts and also anxiety and depression. Each case is different but with the right support and help, individuals can find strategies to help them navigate these challenges. I would say to create a supportive environment, leaders can create an environment and culture where workers can freely express their views without feeling discriminated or judged. Other strategies that can then support this are like providing mental health insurance coverage, allowing their team members to take leave of course based on their organization's structures and policies and basically just fostering a space where their members generally feel safe and cared for.

6. While you have worked as an Associate in CATALEAD, could you share a memorable time, conversation, or moment that has been part of your experience?

One particularly memorable thing I take note of is the engagement we get during our mental health sessions. For example, the individual assessment of stress levels during

our sessions often leads to significant realizations, with participants identifying areas they need to begin checking on and more importantly intentionally reflecting on ways they can then become better leaders of self than others.

7. It has been said, "leaders are readers." Could you share a book that you've found particularly enjoyable and would read over and over again?

'Self-Leadership' by Andrew Bryant and Ana Lucia Kazan has been actually a book I find both enjoyable and worth revisiting.

8. As we approach the festive season, a time when many are on holiday, what wellness practices can we adopt to enhance our mental health?

This is a time majority of us are away from work. It's usually beneficial to plan for the holiday season ahead of time considering aspects such as budgeting to avoid unexpected costs and stressful situations. For parents, it's important to also plan in advance for the new school year separating holiday expenses from school-related costs and there will be a smoother transition back to routine. It's also beneficial to connect with a community around you during this season as it provides a sense of belonging and some shared experiences. Make time to intentionally rest, however rest looks or means to you is critical to help refresh and rejuvenate you as you prepare for the new year.

9. As we conclude our conversation, what final sentiments can you share with our leaders

"As a man thinks, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). Our thoughts influence our emotions and behaviors, and negative perspectives can lead to detrimental effects on mental health. Therefore, I would encourage that people are deliberate about establishing positive perspectives in challenging situations. This aligns with the idea of being transformed by the renewal of the mind. Promoting mental health serves as a roadmap not only to mental well-being but also to physical well-being and a productive life. So, let's prioritize positive thinking and mental well-being for a fulfilling and healthy journey ahead. Otherwise, I also would like to wish our readers happy, restful holidays ahead and a hopeful year ahead!

Envisioning 2024

As we look forward to a hopeful year ahead, here's what you can anticipate and enroll for:

JANUARY – JUNE 2024 CALENDAR

THE HIGH-IMPACT LEADERSHIP SERIES

PROGRAM	DATES
<p>Series One Establishing Your Leadership Roots Five Sessions (<i>Once a week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>31 Jan - 28 Feb Wednesdays 6 Mar - 3 Apr Wednesdays</p>
<p>Series Two Building Your Leadership Muscle Six Sessions (<i>Once a week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>29 Jan - 4 Mar Mondays 29 Apr - 3 Jun Mondays</p>
<p>Series Three Growing Your Leadership Capital Seven Sessions (<i>Once a week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>8 May - 26 Jun Wednesdays</p>
<p>Deep Dive (Residential) Five Days Five Sessions (<i>A week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>26 Feb - 1 Mar 22 - 26 Apr 24 - 28 June</p>

THE CUTTING-EDGE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

PROGRAM	DATES
<p>Level One The Foundation for Cutting-Edge Leadership Five Sessions (<i>Once a week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>18 Mar - 22 Apr Mondays</p>
<p>Level Two Building Blocks for Cutting-Edge Leadership Six Sessions (<i>Once a week</i>) 3 Hours</p>	<p>10 Jun - 15 Jul Mondays</p>



SECTION 6

EDITOR'S NOTE

What a year it has been! More importantly, what an honor it has been for us at **The Catalead** to journey with individuals and organizations towards impact and transformation! I am personally filled with gratitude for the incredible privilege I have to not only hear, but to witness the positive leadership stories of both individuals and organizations.

We are profoundly grateful to our clients and partners who have placed their trust in us to be a voice in their leadership journeys. Your commitment to self-improvement and growth in your spaces has been the driving force behind our shared success. And for that, we applaud you!

We appreciate each one of you for being an integral part of **The Catalead family** and as we reflect on the milestones we've achieved, we subsequently look forward to the opportunities that the future holds. We therefore take this opportunity to wish you a joyful holiday season filled with reflection, joy, and anticipation for the possibilities that lie ahead.

Merry Christmas & a Happy 2024!!!



Julia Mwiti
Operations & Programs Coordinator
The Catalead Associates

THE CATAL^{LEAD}
CATALYSING LEADERSHIP · INSPIRING LEADERS

Merry Christmas

The **Catalead Family** would like to appreciate
our Individual and Corporate Clients &
Partners. We wish them happy holidays ahead
and a prosperous New Year 2024

FOR ENQUIRIES:

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