

‘Leading and managing the dynamics of change through Professionalization of the Public Service’

Key note address at the

8th Conference of Public Service Chief Directors, Chief Executives and Chairpersons of Governing Boards/Councils

April 23-26, 2015

By

Professor Bill Buenar Puplampu PhD C.Pscyhol

Associate Professor (Organisational Behaviour) University of Ghana Business School & Ag. Vice President for Academic Affairs, Central University College

April 2015

1

Introductory comments

- First let me acknowledge all the dignitaries and high office holders here. Chairperson of the Public Services Commission, Mrs. Bridget Katsriku, honorable Members of Parliament and Ministers of the Republic if any.
- In deep respect for our Motherland, I salute all its office holders and thereby note that due protocols have been properly observed.
- I trust that the minutes we shall spend together tackling that matter at hand will afford all of us the opportunity to think, rethink and reposition the work we do for this country.

Caveats, provisos and disclaimers

- Anytime I speak to notables, I like to issue some warnings.
- Anything I say can be held against me – because as a professional academic, I stand by my conceptual beliefs and I shall defend them at every turn
- True introspection is difficult and requires a willingness to tackle unpleasant realities: drunkards, battered spouses, kleptomaniacs and serial deviants cannot reach into wells of repair and cure until they confront their demons. We are in a better place than them, but also have to confront our personal professional limitations
- I am a psychologist. I deal with human foibles and achievements. The matters you wish us to cover today are portentous. To excel here, we need to confront our failings and limitations. We need to commit at a deeply human level, to be different, to work differently, to have no patience for fakes, frauds and fools, to not countenance poor performance... because so much depends on our willingness to truly serve with honour, diligence, distinction ...
- If in my speech I offend, please take it as the ramblings of a professor, and then consider that change is a human issue, leadership is a human matter... true professionalization is a human process, requiring that on occasion, we listen to a wide range of suggestions, some of which we may disagree with.

Your concerns and issues

- The letter I received mentioned that at these forums, you are concerned to exchange ideas and discuss how you may
 - Deal with the issue of the performance of public servants
 - Improve productivity and maintain high levels of service delivery
 - Foster professionalism and proper work ethics
 - Carry the diffusion and adoption of standards of professionalism across the entire public services in the context of reforms...
 - Reposition and develop employee competencies

Areas of focus

- To enable me address your issues and be as relevant as possible I shall speak on a number of concepts and draw on examples from Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria, the US, the UK and elsewhere.
- I shall seek to make the point that in leadership, the buck, does stop at your door.
- Failure of your institution must be interpreted as your failure.

Some Diagnostics

What are the ills in/of your organisation that you may wish to cure?

Is the Public Services Commission sufficiently supportive?

Areas of focus – 2

the following concepts will be explored

- Professionalism as a
 - Process
 - Code
 - Skill set
 - Institutional arrangement
- Governance and its role in fostering professionalization
 - The CEO
 - The Board Chair
 - The Executive Secretary/Board Secretary

Areas – 3

- Ethics of Public Sector work
 - Ethics of the leader
 - Ethics of the leaders' immediate reports
 - Ethics of employees
 - When you go to sleep at night, do you sleep?
- Change and its management
 - Change in the public sector
 - Change in the private sector
- Areas of organizational change
 - Choose your battles with caution
 - Only 20% of change is successful. What is the implication?
- Politics of Organisational Change – You, Your Organisation, Machiavelli and God.

Areas – 4

- Leadership that is Professional
 - Engagement
 - System Development
- Check if your Organisation is Sick
 - Are you the cause?
- Tackling ourselves
 - Occupational schizophrenia
 - Citizenship

Protocols for managing the dynamics of change

- Required Skills of managers and CEOs
- Performance Management: stop the pretense please.
- Recognising the limitations in the public sector
- Reducing cultural opacity and elasticity
- Trustworthiness and Leadership Accountability (lead from the front)
 - Openness
 - Responsibilities
 - Answerability

Public Sector Change initiatives

- Service Charters
- Performance Contracts
- Organisational Restructurings
- Rationalization of HRM systems...
- What are the KSA implications for Training and Development of your people?