Empower Her

Nansubuga redefines leadership

At 28, she became the youngest mid-level manager in a government parastatal, leading a team of about 40 agents. Gaining validation for her ideas early in her career from senior colleagues was a hurdle she had to overcome. It turns out, results matter more than age.

BY DAPHINE NAKABIRI

Justine Andrea Nansubuga is the manager, customer excellence at Jubilee Life Insurance Uganda, where she manages client and stakeholder relationships, including those with brokers and regulators, to ensure seamless service delivery across the organisation. She brings more than 12 years of professional experience.

By the age of 13, she was already helping her mother run errands, an experience that built her resilience and shaped her work ethic.

In 2015, shortly after completing her Bachelor's degree in Mass Communication, with a major in Public Relations at Uganda Christian University, she chanced upon a newspaper advertisement for Fireworks Advertising's first apprenticeship programme.

At a time when advertising agencies were not widely known, the inclusion of a public relations internship caught her attention. She applied, was shortlisted, and joined the six-month programme, where interns rotated across departments for broad exposure. Her commitment earned her retention at the agency.

Handling complaints

While at Fireworks, she secured an opportunity in Dubai with the Marriott Group in hospitality management. At 24, she embraced the move, marking the beginning of her interest in customer experience.

"With a background in marketing and communications, I realised I could leverage these skills to deliver effectively," she says.

Her role involved tele-sales, handling group reservations, organising events, and negotiating rates with corporate clients.

The workload was demanding and unpredictable, often requiring her to handle both complaints and approvals. This exposure deepened her appreciation for customer interaction.

As her contract neared its end, Hilton took over operations, introducing organisational changes. Although she was retained, she chose to return home to reunite with her family.

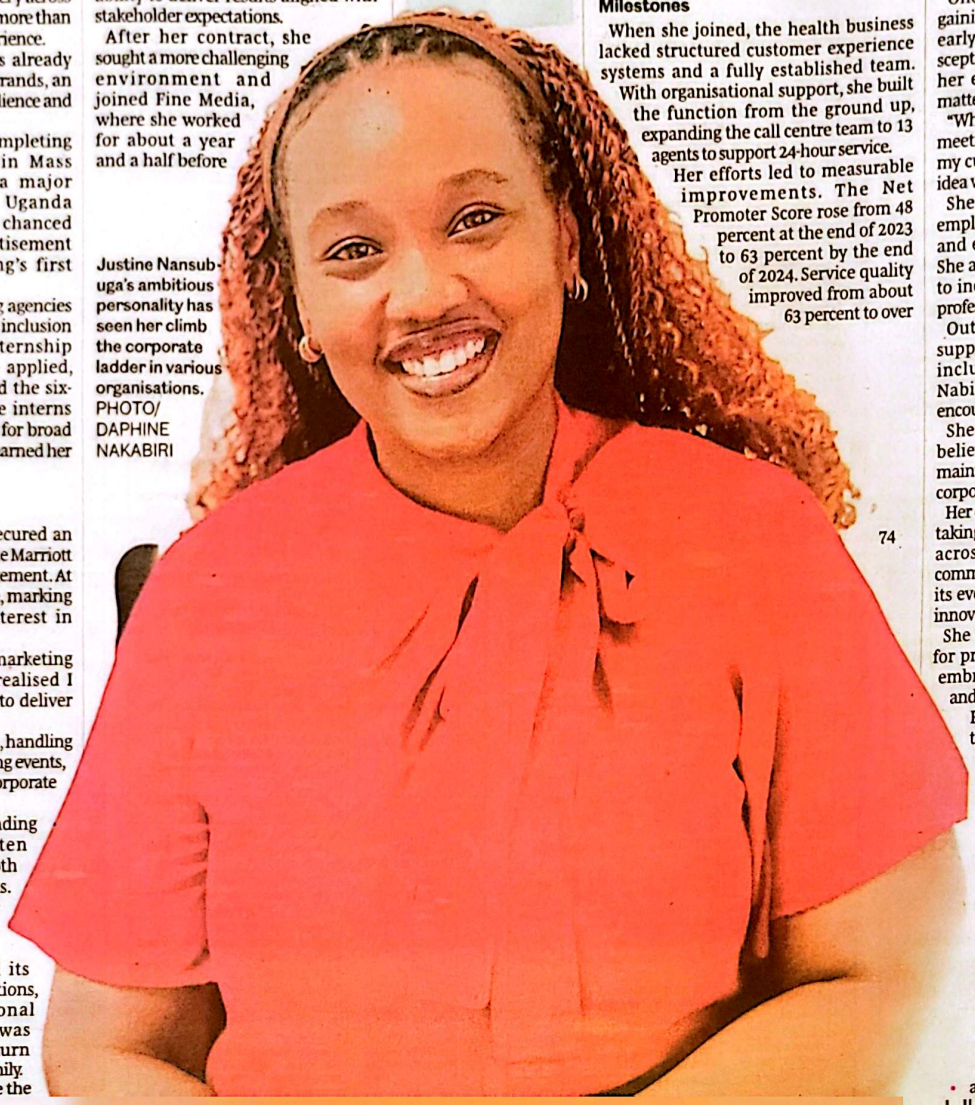
She returned shortly before the adjusting back home, she secured a role at Outbox Uganda as a member success associate, an opportunity she had interviewed for while still in Dubai.

At Outbox, she worked with partners to support entrepreneurs and contributed to the implementation of the first Hi Innovator Programme by NSSF. The role strengthened her ability to deliver results aligned with stakeholder expectations.

After her contract, she sought a more challenging environment and joined Fine Media, where she worked for about a year and a half before moving on due to operational challenges. She later joined UMEME as a digital manager.

WORKING WITH GEN Z'S

Her approach involves studying the industry, identifying gaps, and simplifying processes from the customer's perspective. She now leads a team of Generation Z employees, promoting innovation and engage actively in decision-making. She also mentors them by exposing them to industry trends and supporting their professional growth. In her role as vice president for Next Gen, she works with young professionals, promoting mentorship and encouraging them to navigate the corporate space with confidence.



Justine Nansubuga's ambitious personality has seen her climb the corporate ladder in various organisations. PHOTO/ DAPHINE NAKABIRI

Work across sectors

At 28, she became the youngest mid-level manager in the parastatal, leading a team of about 40 agents. Her work focused on managing the company's online reputation, handling customer feedback, and shifting customers from call centres to digital platforms such as WhatsApp and social media to improve efficiency and reduce costs, targets she successfully met.

In May 2024, during UMEME's concession to UEDCL, she identified an opportunity at Jubilee Life Insurance Uganda for a marketing, communications and customer experience manager.

"This was new for me as I was transitioning across sectors, but having worked in different industries made it easier to adapt," she explains.

Her approach involves studying the industry, identifying gaps, and simplifying processes from the customer's perspective. At Jubilee, she was tasked with leading the health business, a competitive space where client retention is critical due to frequent switching between providers. She focused on ensuring that internal processes translate into a simpler experience for customers.

28 MID-LEVEL MANAGER

Milestones

When she joined, the health business lacked structured customer experience systems and a fully established team. With organisational support, she built the function from the ground up, expanding the call centre team to 13 agents to support 24-hour service.

Her efforts led to measurable improvements. The Net Promoter Score rose from 48 percent at the end of 2023 to 63 percent by the end of 2024. Service quality improved from about 63 percent to over 74 percent, while public conv... insurance increased from 21 ... percent, reflecting stronger ... engagement.

She also played a role in the ... pitch of the J-Junior product ... under 17, launched in Jul ... recognised at the Insurance ... Awards in the non-life categor...

Internally, she works across ... to align teams with the com... emphasising customer reten... driver of growth.

Aspirations and approach

Nansubuga draws inspiration f... known for convenience, such ... particularly in how they use ... and digital tools to enhance ... experience. She adapts similar ... work.

She also uses customer com... a resource for identifying ... improving processes. As ... she benchmarks ... markets, including ... Insurance in Kenya ... from both their ... and challenges.

Before implementing ... ideas, she conducts inter... runs to identify and resolve p... issues.

Any setbacks?

One of her biggest challenges ha... gaining validation for her ideas, ... early in her career when her ... scepticism from senior colleagues ... her experience has shown that ... matter more than age.

"When I was just 30, I was attending ... meetings and many questioned thi... my current experience, the strengt... idea weighs more than just age," she ...

She now leads a team of Genera... employees, encouraging them to ... and engage actively in decision-m... She also mentors them by exposing ... to industry trends and supporting ... professional growth.

Outside work, she relies on a ... support system of family and f... including former schoolmates ... Nabisunsa Girls' School, who pro... encouragement and shared understa...

She is open about her challenges ... believes in seeking help when ... maintaining that persistence is esse... corporate life.

Her drive is rooted in solving problem... taking on new challenges. Despite w... across multiple sectors, she re... committed to the insurance industry ... its evolving nature and opportunities ... innovation in customer experience.

She emphasises resilience as a ke... for professionals, encouraging pe... embrace criticism, learn from m... and remain focused.

For those without insurance, she ... them to consider affordable pro... highlighting its importance ... protecting health, life, and pro...

What lies ahead

Nansubuga has joined the ... Customer Experience (CX) P... where she hopes to share ideas ... learn from other markets to impr... service delivery in Uganda.

In her role as Vice Presi... for Next Gen, she works ... young professionals, promoting ... mentorship and encouraging ... to navigate the corporate space ... confidence. She is also passionate ... about advocating for greater ... attention to the boy-child, who ...

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