



WANDA HAS LOOKED FOR A JOB SINCE 2012

Joseph Wanda, 29, speaks with a low baritone as he digs into a fluffy box of papers. The box, he says, is a reminder of his long journey to get a job that started as early as 2012 after graduating with an Economics degree from Kyambogo University.

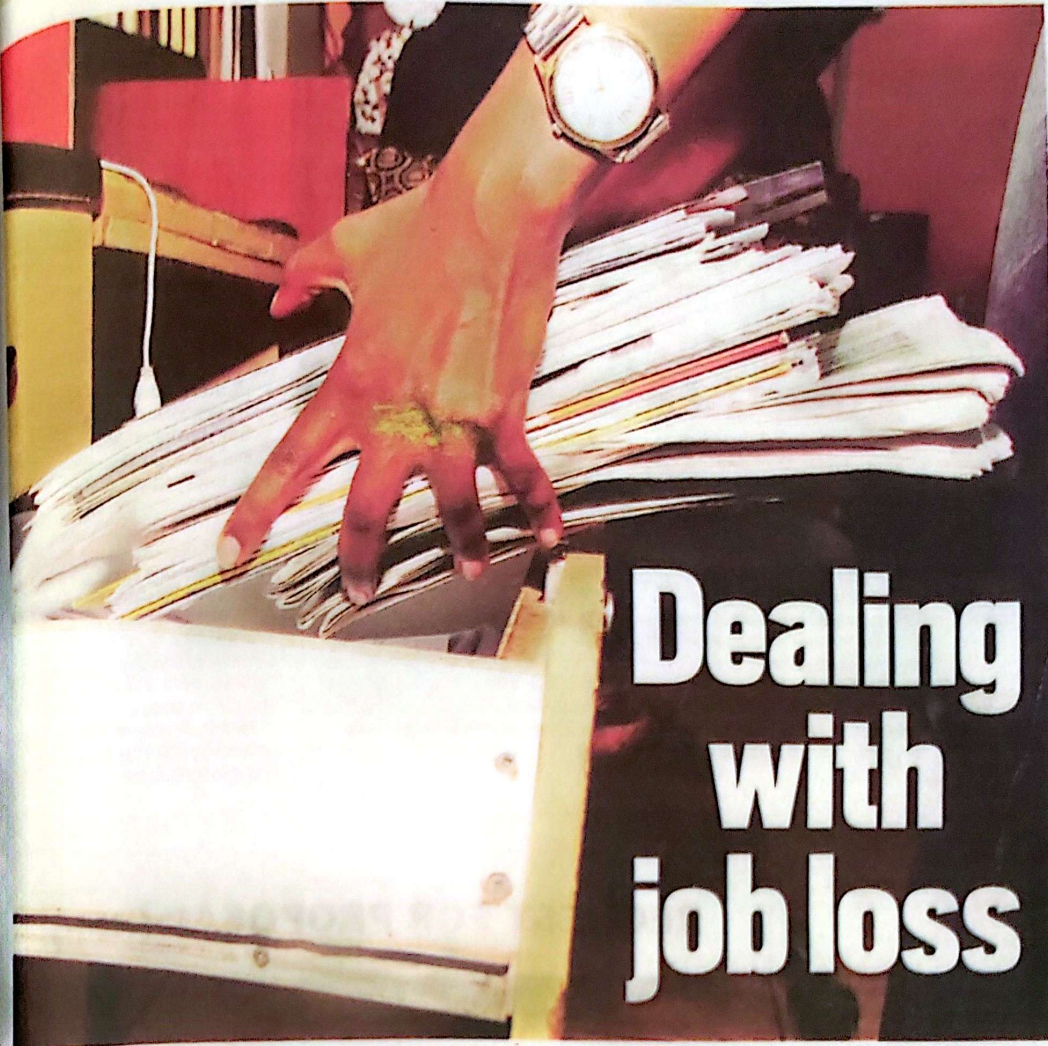


QN: MY EX-EMPLOYER HAS REFUSED TO PAY ME, PLEASE ADVISE

I recently part timed as a cashier in a bar and restaurant that offered no offs and no allowances. I was only entitled to an end of month payment. However, the owner of the bar has refused to pay me. What should I do?



Live with it. Job loss is a painful experience but when it happens, you must learn how to live with it.



Dealing with job loss

Move on. As you pack your things out of that office, accept your fate and move on. PHOTO BY RACHEL MABALA.

TALK ABOUT IT

Look out for the people who are close to you to talk about what happened without hiding anything. It might be a friend, a family member or an associate who knows about you and is willing to speak candidly about your fate. "Why do you have to take a month without telling the people who are close to you that you lost your job?" Mary Goretti Nalubega, the human resource manager at Café Divine, wonders.

BY DESIRE MBABAALI
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In the last two years, the economy has experienced sluggish growth constraining the business environment that is increasingly being disrupted by rapid changes in technology.

As a result, jobs have been lost and companies are cutting back on investment and recruitment of human resources, which in essence is worsening the already struggling job market.

In 2017 alone more than 5,000 have lost their jobs with the most relatable case be-

ing the 400 workers who had joined Dfcu Bank from defunct Crane Bank.

Companies such as MTN, Africell, Kakira Sugar Works, Pepsi and Monitor Publications, among others, reports indicate, have let workers go home citing slowed revenue growth and disruptions by technology.

Such times, according to Wilson Muheirwe, a human resource manager at Ham Holdings, are the most difficult for any company and if they are not well handled they might turn out disastrous.

"It is not any fun for an employer to lay off workers. It

comes after a lot of sacrifice. Employers are always compelled by the brutal dynamics of the market," he says.

Job loss is not alien to Uganda, it is a well spread problem but becomes more brutal in Africa where there is an acute scarcity of jobs.

According to Challenger, Gray and Christmas, an outplacement firm in the US, the country's energy sector alone laid off some 255,000 employees in 2017 with additional casualties in the service sector of at least a million jobs were lost.

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Hopeful: For almost six years, Joseph Wanda has not had a regular job but he continues to be hopeful. He has never stopped applying and looking for opportunities.

Wanda has looked for a job since 2012

BY PHIONAH NASSANGA
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Joseph Wanda, 29, speaks with a low baritone as he digs into a fluffy of papers.

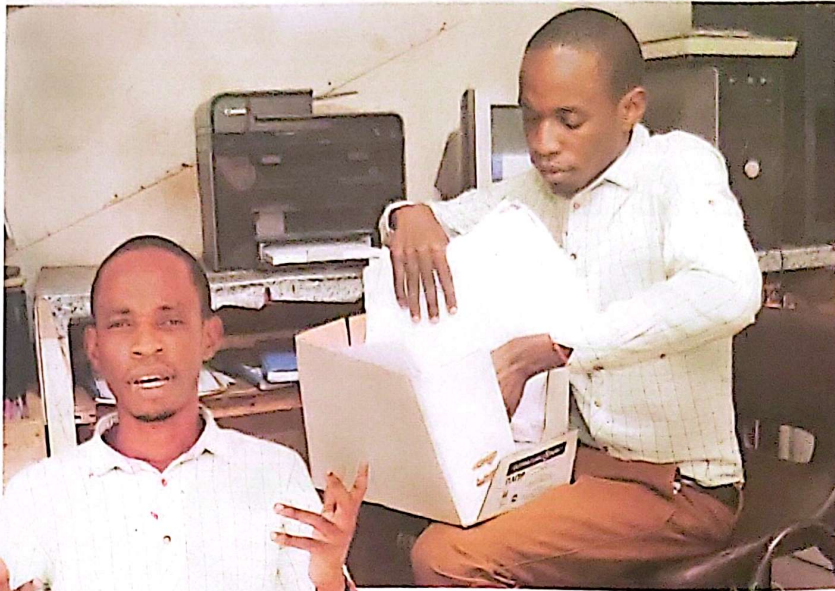
The box, he says, is a reminder of his long journey to get a job that started as early as 2012 after graduating with an Economics degree from Kyambogo University.

Dressed in brown khaki trousers matched over a checkered long sleeved shirt and dusty black shoes, Wanda tells of the struggles he has gone through since childhood.

"I lost my mother at a tender age. I was schooled and raised by Fred Kagwire, my elder brother. He was my father and mother. I never knew how mother's love tastes," he says, with a sudden feat of sadness.

The struggles of life, he says, have taught him a hard lesson and through hard work he was able to attain a degree, which as he had thought would be an insurance into securing a better future.

"I always thought I would get a job immediately after university. But it has been this long. However, I have never given up. I still apply for jobs and keep up with events through newspapers, online publications and networking," he says flushing a smile.



JOSEPH WANDA'S TWO CENTS

29

THE 29-YEAR-OLD, WHO HOLDS A DEGREE IN ECONOMICS HAS BEEN SEARCHING FOR A JOB FOR ALMOST SIX YEARS NOW

Wanda is of average build standing at about five feet tall.

From our interaction, he seems a likeable character as we easily strike a cord, joking between the almost one-and-half hour interview.

After graduating, Wanda had thought of getting a job in a financial institution but he, up to 2013, had to settle into managing his brother's stationery shop in Rubaga, Kampala as he waited for the opportunity.

"I realised that I had to do something as I wait for the job. Reality had struck in and I had to adjust a little," he says.

However, towards the end of 2013, Wanda through a friend, was alerted of a job vacancy - research assistant - which had been advertised.

"I applied just for just. I was beginning to lose trust in advertised jobs. But I was surprised when I was called for an interview," he says.

However, the job only lasted a month as the company, which had given him a six-month contract had to call off the contract citing financial difficulties.

Wanda was back to square one but kept optimistic and after about seven months he was called for

1 Never give up

For the five years Wanda has been searching for a job he has thought of giving up but he lifts himself up to push on. "If I was not strong will, I would have given up by now but I keep pushing myself until I get what I deserve," he says.

2 Challenges

Wanda's life has been a hell of challenges. He lost his mother at an early age but he was picked up by his

brother and molded to the man he is now. However, the failure to get a regular source of income has become another challenge in his life.

3 Always cautious

Even amid challenges, Wanda has lived a cautious life always minding about what people think and say about him. He believes that it is during his youth that he can define to the rest of the world who he is.

Hopeful. Wanda believes that he will soon find a rewarding job. However for now he can only continue the search. PHOTOS BY GEOFFREY LUGAJU

for a Kenya-based company - IT Hub, which was also a six months contract.

Such is the job market and just like many youth, Wanda has had a shared story of how it has been difficult to secure jobs.

Short term contract jobs have been Wanda's thing as he has had about six of them since 2013.

However, he has kept on applying for different opportunities and he is hopeful that he will one day get something better.

Currently, he is working on a six-month contract with the Ministry of Health to supply treated insecticide mosquito nets to people in Wakiso and Kampala districts.

He has also worked with Infectious Disease Institute in Makerere for three months conducting research on different aspects.

However, his prayer now is to get a permanent job that can ably pay his bills as well as give him an opportunity to grow into something.

Background

Wanda was born in Kacuncu in Mbarara District.

He attended Mother Janet Primary School in Masaka District before moving to St Josephs Vocational School in Mbarara for his high school education.

For six years now, Wanda has had to juggle life without a regular job which as he says, "is not easy especially when one has other responsibilities to take care of such as rent, food among others".

"I exercise restraint on a number of things. I do not just spend because I have to account for every coin I spend," he says.

Wanda also writes reports for university students for which he charges a small fee.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Fleming Fund Grants Programme

Mott MacDonald Limited, a registered Limited Liability Company in the United Kingdom, is engaged by the UK Department of Health as the Management Agent for the Fleming Fund Grants Programme.

Through this RFP, on behalf of the UK Department of Health, Mott MacDonald Limited invites proposals from qualified licensed/registered legal entities in Uganda to work toward strengthening Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and response in Uganda in collaboration with the Government of Uganda's Antimicrobial Resistance Task Force.

The detailed RFP document can be downloaded from www.mottmac.com/fleming. An Applicants Information Session will be held in Kampala on 8 February 2018 for any interested parties. Prior interest must be registered in accordance with guidance in the RFP.

Please note that the deadline for registering interest to apply for the grant Application Pack is 12 February 2018 as detailed under 10.4 of the RFP document. Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the Application Guidelines by 17:00 GMT on 7 March 2018.



Job loss is painful but you should live with it

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Losing a job is a painful reality but one should know that it is not the end of the world.

The most important thing is finding it within yourself to accept without blaming anyone for your fate.

According to Muheirwe, the company has interests and in times when things are hard, it has to find a way of surviving.

Therefore, if you become the victim of the hard times, accept and move on that is if you have been handled respectfully and in accordance with the law.

"The owners of the business want it afloat. So they have got to let some people go. Move on and look for new opportunities," he says.

As an employee, you should learn how to handle a job loss as below

Be prepared

After an employer has assessed the impact of a restructuring process, Muheirwe says, they will proceed look out for who to let go irrespective of their contribution.

Therefore, he says, always be prepared and never be sure of not being among the people to let go.

"Avoid that false confidence. Be prepared to go. Otherwise you might not handle a surprise if you are part of the victims," he says.

Demand respect from employer

It does not matter at which level an employee is. Employees that are being laid off, according to Muheirwe, must be respected, counselled and compensated for the loss.

"Why do you have to summon people to your

small office that is located in the middle of other office to tell them of their fate? Be professional. It does not hurt to take such an exercise in a scheduled place or even off site. Otherwise, you risk taking away concentration from other workers," he says.

Build a network

Social networks are the best thing you can have in times of a job loss. Therefore, build them "as long as you are in a position to do so".

"Connect with other people who can employ you. They might not be potential employers but they might know someone who has an opportunity," says Mary Gorreti Nalubega, the human resource manager at Café Divine.

Save and save

However hard it might be, according to Nalubega, always find that extra coin to put on the side to prepare for eventuality that might have no sight in end.

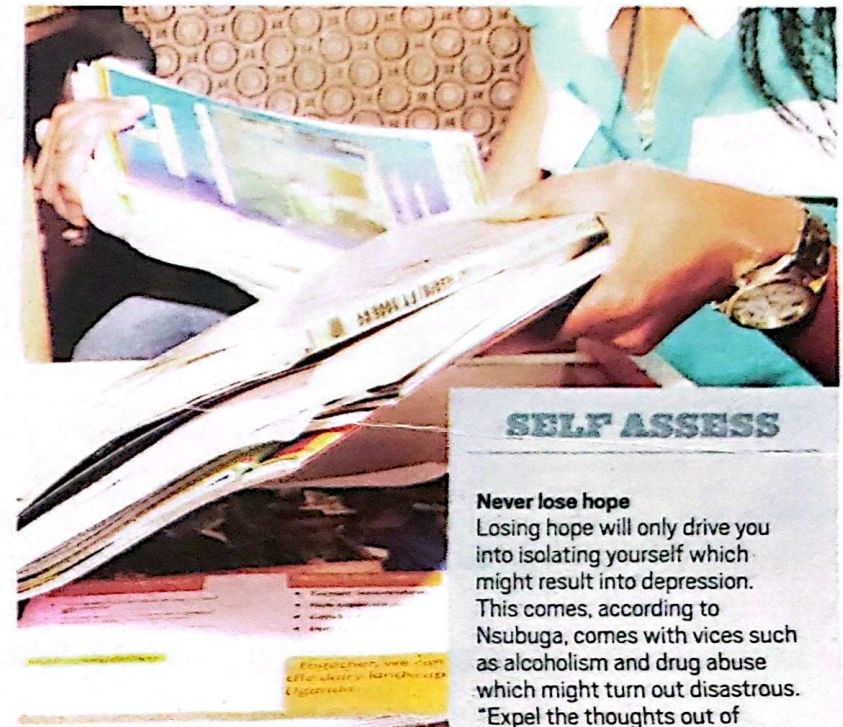
"When you are still earning, save as much as you can for the hard times," she says, outlining that you might save through a Sacco, bank or a group saving scheme.

Hold your head high

In such circumstances, some people tend to lose confidence, which in the end might work against them.

However, according to Henry Nsubuga, a career development facilitator, do not undermine your potential because you have lost a job.

"Get up and show your former boss that losing you was a bad idea. This can only be achieved if you maintain a high degree of confidence," he says.



SELF ASSESS

Never lose hope

Losing hope will only drive you into isolating yourself which might result into depression. This comes, according to Nsubuga, comes with vices such as alcoholism and drug abuse which might turn out disastrous. "Expel the thoughts out of yourself and be positive. Go out and mingle," he says.

Ask yourself questions

According to Nsubuga, the best way to handle a job loss is making a candid self-assessment. "Do not cheat yourself. Ask yourself questions including those that might be irritating," he says.

Move on. Empty your locker and move on as early as possible. PHOTO BY RACHEL MABALA

PREPARE

Be ready: At a time when the economy is struggling always be prepared for a job loss. Do not feel invincible. Anything can happen and when you are surprised it gets more painful.