



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers



e-newsletter

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## Discussion with Engr. Chianyi A. Dennar (FNSE) on Mentorship and Professional Development of Young Engineering Graduates

**E-Newsletter:** *Can you tell us a little bit about your experience and your contribution to the Engineering profession?*

**Engr. Dennar:** My name is Engr. Dennar. Presently, I work with Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC), Port Harcourt, I'm the Manager of Infrastructure and Estate Project. After my graduation from secondary school, I had the opportunity to further my education in the United States of America where I had my Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Civil Engineering. I had the opportunity of having on hand experience with a construction firm in Denmark as an engineer for one year. Then I came back to Nigeria for the National Youth Service Corps Scheme and I served with Elf. That is how I started my engineering experience in the industry and is over thirty years now. Well I secured employment with NAOC and started as a field engineer. When the company found it worthy that I can handle project facilities, I was moved to civil engineering facilities for Projects. I was involved in the construction of the first NGL Plant in the country. The interesting thing there is that it was an avenue to interact with other engineers from other disciplines. Later I was moved to managerial positions at various points in time.

**E-Newsletter:** *Thank you very much. That is interesting. You have engineers working with and under you in this establishment, how do you look at the career development of these engineers especially the young ones? What structures do you have on ground to help them develop professionally?*

**Engr. Dennar:** These issues bother me particularly those of us in the civil engineering department, and so we take mentorship very seriously. For those young ones who are ready to learn, we are ready to expose them. Without field knowledge, they cannot acquire experience that is why we get young engineers under us involved from the very beginning of any project. This gives them a sense of belonging. If we have a project, we hand it over to them while we do the supervisory work. This gives them the room to take charge, ask on the job question and interact with other engineers. As the project progresses, we leave them to be independent. We only come in when the challenge is beyond their ability. From our observations, I will tell you that engineers we engaged in the late 80s and early 90s were serious, but after that those coming recently have been very shallow minded. At times I start wondering if they were not well grounded academically. But as you have rightfully mentioned some of them want the easy way, not knowing that engineering has no shortcuts. You definitely have to sit down, be on the project, exercise patience, learn and make mistake. Our responsibility is to make sure that they don't make costly mistake, we are there to guide them through what they are to know and do. For instance, we have a drilling

project going on in one of our locations and we have sent engineers there to work and to learn. They have to give report on whatsoever is going on there; we go through their reports, make corrections where necessary and send them back, in some cases we go along with them. This is Field Investigation. In this manner these young engineers become perfect on the job.

**E-Newsletter:** *You've said so much on training within the company, what about training outside the company's environment, like involvement in professional activities such as conferences, seminars and workshops etc?*

**Engr. Dennar:** We have such training going on. Every year we have a set of training program for our engineers both outside and within the company environment. These trainings are geared towards making them professionally stable and confident engineer. We have evaluation procedure which enables us to determine their performance. We are even pushing it to a stage whereby if they don't get professional registration within a certain period, the engineers might be denied promotion. So the awareness is there and we are trying as much as possible on our own part to make management to be conscious of the fact that it is a corporate responsibility to encourage our engineers to be professionally registered and well equipped. Recently you can see that candidates from NAOC for NSE and COREN Registration are on the increase.

**E-Newsletter:** *We are looking at engineering holistically and those that are working here, your effort to ensure that they are developed professionally. Now let's go out of the Industry, perhaps out of the government and then those that have graduated from school, they have their certificates but cannot get job. What in your opinion do you think can be done to stop this issue of engineering graduates unemployment?*

**Engr. Dennar:** Let me be practical. When I first graduated in the United States, because of their policy, they could not employ me but I took the extra mile to go to the department of public works, I decided to offer my services to them at no cost. This was in an attempt to acquire the necessary experiences. And the same thing is also happening here. I have been advising our young engineers on this issue. For example a lot of the young students would like to have their industrial attachment where they can be remunerated but owing to the economic situation these companies do not want to spend money in that area. So I was looking at a situation where our young engineers should be able to offer their services at least at the training level free of charge as a way of acquiring necessary experience for the future. Our young engineers need to know that making money in engineering is all about the amount of experiences they have. In the case of our graduates that are looking for jobs, there are lots of areas they can fit in like these jobs that are being done by non engineers,

our graduate engineers who are looking for job could start from there. Another way they can do it is by coming together, let's say three or five and form a co-operative unit and become an enterprise.

**E-Newsletter:** *That's right but jealousy and greed comes up when the money starts pumping in and this scare people off. What are the necessary tools do you think can help in practical application of the engineering profession like software, in the universities they are not available. These days of design where software is the in-thing, what view do you have for the engineers from our universities?*

**Engr. Dennar:** There's no way that our engineers can not be up to date by making use of the latest technology. I know that our universities are handicap in terms of provision of these amenities. This is where government and the private sector should come in. Our institutions need support to make sure that the learning experience is comparable to whatsoever we have in other parts of the world. In this case, I will suggest that we have to make a massive drive, there have to be an orientation, awareness in the eye of the public to know that these are the things that are really necessary for our children to be comparable to other children in the world. The drive is not only to get at the government but the private sector as well. The private sector should really have a role to play to make sure the tools are really available to our institution otherwise the institution on their own cannot cope.

**E-Newsletter:** *What do you think about the companies like here in the oil producing areas? Don't you think it is also necessary for the oil companies, the servicing companies to contribute towards that direction?*

**Engr. Dennar:** That is exactly what I am saying. In our own system, there is what we call, "Community Management System". The essence is to figure out the social impact of our investment on the environment. When we do this kind of analysis, we get the stakeholders to make an input. However, university on their own part should be able to prioritize their need, send it to the industry. Let them know that these are the things you really need, industries like ours is ready to help in that regard.

... contd in page 2



Engr. Chianyi A. Dennar FNSE

**Discussion with Engr. Chianyidi A. Dennar ... contd. from pg 1**

*E-Newsletter: Thank you very much. Before we round off this discussion, what advice do you have for Government and Engineering graduates on this professional development.*



Engr. Dr. Ujile & Engr. Dennar

**Engr. Dennar:** Let me start from engineering graduate. They have to help themselves. They should be able to make necessary sacrifices for their own sake because they are the future leaders of tomorrow and if they are not well equipped, they might not be able to face the challenges of tomorrow. So they really have to sit down, put money aside and get the knowledge. For industry, if

they have been doing anything in respect to professional development, they have to do more because their successes also depend on these engineers. Education and knowledge is where the future is, actually where the challenges is, actually where the wheat is being separated from the chaff. There should be a corporate social responsibility on behalf of every organization to make sure they help in the aspect of educational development of the country. For Government, the government of any generation should know that the failure of that generation is as a result of their poor performance particularly in terms of education and technology for our youth. They have to do more. Politics should be put aside when it comes to educational development of this country. Until we realize this, we will find out that we are only moving some steps backward.

*E-Newsletter: Thank you very much. We appreciate the time and audience you have given us and we hope when next we call perhaps on other areas you will grant us audience. Thank you.*

**World's Largest Shake Table Test - Earthquake Simulation**

**Why Test Building**

How would the building that you live in stand up to an earthquake? If you lived in an earthquake-prone part of the world don't you think it would be a good idea to test building materials, methods and designs before construction?

History has demonstrated that building materials, designs and construction methods can be responsible for death or survival when an earthquake strikes. Damage inventories after major earthquakes show that some types of buildings provide survivable environments for people while other types of buildings collapse with significant loss of life.

**World's Largest Shake Table Test**

Researchers recently completed the world's largest shake table experiment to learn how a full-size building responds to the vibrations of an earthquake. In this test, a six-story wood-frame condominium with twenty-three residential units was shaken by forces more powerful than any earthquake that California has experienced in modern time.



Full-size condominium building positioned on the shake table and ready for testing. Photo by John van de Lindt, Colorado State University.

One of the goals of this experiment was to learn how the forces of an earthquake transmit through a specially-designed wood-frame building of several stories. Data was collected by placing sensors throughout the structure to monitor the forces and motion between building components. That data will be valuable in assessing the performance of construction methods, materials and designs used in this building.

Based upon a news release by the National Science Foundation - July, 2009

**FELICITATION**



Engr. Chf. G. Massari, FNSE

**The Nigerian Society of Engineers**, Port Harcourt Branch, most heartily congratulate Engr. Chief Giandomenico Massari, FNSE, on the conferment of Nigerian citizenship on him by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua on Monday 13th July 2009. Chief, we celebrate this wonderful achievement with you as you add another feather to your cap.

Engr. B. M. Ogariawo, MNSE  
Chairman

**ENGINEERING SEMINAR**



The Port Harcourt Branch of the Nigerian Society of Engineer organized a seminar on **Safety in Engineering & General HSE** on Thursday 16th July 2009 at the branch secretariat. From left is the third speaker Engr. Chinad Ibeanusi mnse, the first speaker Engr. Camillus Umoh mnse, the branch chairman Engr. B. M. Ogariawo mnse, the branch vice chairman Engr. H. Igoni mnse and to the far right is Engr. Victor O. E. Sodje mnse who was the second speaker. The three speakers emphasized the importance of safety on engineering work sites.

**FELICITATION**



ENGR. Denis Dania

Engr. Denis Abu Azebeokhai Dania, the General Secretary of The Nigerian Society of Engineers, Port Harcourt Branch was on Saturday 22nd June 2009 at Al-gate Hotel GRA Phase II, Port Harcourt, conferred the fellowship of the Institute of Corporate Administration of Nigeria. By this Engr. Dania has become a fellow of the institute. He was conferred alongside 20 other captains of industries drawn from SPDC, NNPC, etc. The e-newsletter crew heartily congratulate our pioneer publisher for a well deserved honour.



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**NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!**

All members of NSE PH should pay their **annual branch dues of N4000** and **compulsory levy of N5000** towards the Engineer Resource Center to **UBA ACC. NO: 0820280000194 (Port Harcourt main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription of N5,500.00** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 14202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank