

A Masterful Student Publishes His Work and Gains Worldwide Influence

Donald W. Mitchell

Take a poll asking which leaders have the best track records, and you'll produce a list of those who have had the most written about them. That's an inaccurate perception: The best-known leaders are seldom the most accomplished ones; rather these celebrity leaders excel in gaining attention.

If you are an unrecognized leader who performs well, how can you gain the recognition and influence that you deserve?

Some people might advise hiring an expensive public relations agency, employing a ghost writer to prepare articles for prestigious publications, and taking public speaking lessons. After spending a few hundred thousand dollars and engaging in several years of serious effort, many people successfully follow this advice to gain recognition. But even then, influence may elude the new celebrity if the media have latched onto some quality other than the person's expertise.

There must be a better way. I know of one that's well worth your time: a method Dr. Elijah Chingosho, Technical & Training Director for African Airlines Association in Nairobi, employed very effectively to gain worldwide influence.

Before starting his doctoral studies in strategic management at age 44 with Rushmore University, Dr. Chingosho had already immersed himself in learning like most people dive into a swimming pool on a hot day ... with total commitment and enthusiasm. He had already earned not one, not two, but three master's degrees – a Master of Engineering from Loughborough University in England, an MBA from the University of Zimbabwe, and a Master of Commerce degree in Transport Economics from the University of South Africa. Dr. Chingosho is one bright man, and he's a very hard worker.

Professional recognition followed his academic successes. After fewer than ten years service in the Air Force of Zimbabwe, he was appointed a group captain and director of engineering, a role that involved leading over 1,000 people in critical maintenance activities. After leaving the air force, he took a position as general manager of engineering for Air Zimbabwe, a position he left for his current one with the African Airlines Association.

In the search to find and recruit him for the African Airlines Association, it became clear to the association that Dr. Chingosho was the best qualified person in Africa for dealing with engineering, operations, environmental, communication, navigation, and air traffic management issues as well as delivering great training in those areas. Despite this professional success, relatively few people who were not involved with aviation in Zimbabwe knew about him.

At that point, Dr. Chingosho joined Rushmore University as a student. He chose Rushmore because the university gave him the freedom to focus his learning on those areas that would directly help him achieve his learning and professional goals. As a busy executive, he needed a university that would provide him with a flexible format so that he could take the courses without having to leave his job.

As part of his Rushmore studies, Dr. Chingosho wrote a dissertation that he turned into a book called *African Airlines in the Era of Liberalisation* which was later published by his association. The book outlines the key issues for all stakeholders of African airlines over the coming decades and provides several blueprints for greater success.

This publication profoundly affected his life. Here is what Dr. Chingosho has to say about the experience:

“Publishing the book on African airlines brought me and my organisation fame and revenue, and assists our stakeholders in making informed decisions concerning airlines on the continent. The book is often cited by various stakeholders at conferences and in decision making as often there is no other credible source of comprehensive information about the African airline business.

“I have been surprised by the large number of people, many of whom I have never met before, who come to me and express appreciation for giving them a vehicle to learn about the aviation business in Africa. I now get invited to speak at various conferences on a wide range of topics. AFRAA is now recognized worldwide as the spokes body on issues affecting the African airline industry such as on safety, security, infrastructure, the environment, training people, etc. AFRAA is invited all over the world, including by the European Union and the USA, to share views on topical subjects pertaining to the airline business.

“I have gained fame and recognition as an expert in the industry and I am very pleased to be sharing my knowledge and expertise with others.”

I asked Dr. Chingosho to describe the role that his Rushmore education played in this success. Here’s what he told me:

“For *African Airlines in the Era of Liberalisation*, I needed to write a book for a worldwide audience. The Rushmore training assisted me in various facets of writing a commercial non-fiction book. I needed to know how to select a subject, conduct research on my topic, and check for competition. The Rushmore training helped me with ideas on how to design book covers. I needed to know how to make publishing choices. The Rushmore training enabled me to make informed choices as to whether to sell my book to a publisher or publish it myself. The training also guided me on how to find the appropriate publisher and agent should I so wish.

“For example, the course 1112, Poynter on Writing and Publishing Books, taught me (among other things) how to find free research material, quotations, art, and stories on the

internet; develop core content into downloadable books, CDs, e-books, audio books, reports, articles, seminar and consulting material; how to find an editor and other help; and handling interviews, autographing and a throng of fans.

“The Rushmore experience also taught me how readers read books particularly appreciating the four levels of reading, namely elementary, inspectional, analytical, and syntopical. I learned the complex art of reading and the flexible application of some basic rules to different types of reading. By understanding how readers read books, I was able to use a writing style which made my book accessible to a wide readership. Indeed, I have since received positive and encouraging feedback about the book which the wide variety of readers found to be very enlightening, easy to read and understand, and very practical and relevant.”

Following his graduation in 2004, Rushmore recognized Dr. Chingosho’s excellent work by asking him to become an associate professor in 2005. I am proud to have Dr. Chingosho as one of my colleagues at the university.

Having developed such a fine ability to write business books, Dr. Chingosho has since written two other management books and is much in demand around the world for speaking engagements on airline issues.

What a difference one paper can make in a person’s life!

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Donald W. Mitchell is a professor at Rushmore University. For more information about ways to engage in fruitful lifelong learning at Rushmore to increase your influence, visit

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