



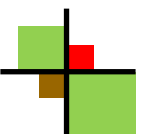
COMPETITION AUTHORITY OF KENYA

KNOWLEDGE HUB

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Issue 10

This issue of the Knowledge Hub features Mr. Hesbon Likhaya. Hesbon retired as a records officer in December 2024 after thirty three (33) years of service in the public sector. He was privileged to serve the Competition Authority since its inception for twelve years after years of employment with the Authority's predecessor-the Prices and Monopolies Commission. He speaks about his wealth of experience in the many years of distinguished service.



Hesbon Likhaya

Why records? Take us through your career path, when you joined the then Ministry of Finance, Monopolies and finally the Authority. What were the highest and lowest moments of your career?

I view records as the heart of an organization, without records all major functions of an organization cease to exist. Records are the starting point for any case or investigation and without proper management or direction, the organization will fail to meet its mandate. Any person domiciled at a registry needs to be well-versed in records management skills so as not to misdirect an organization. I started my career at the Treasury as a clerical officer. In those days, records officer positions were nonexistent, it was later on that these positions were created in several ministries and that's when many people went back to college to study records and records management to enable them to get promotions to become records officers. When the Authority came to be, I was reluctant to leave the ministry because I was unsure about what would happen. My colleague Sarah Chege tirelessly urged me to apply for the interview to join the Authority, I would honestly say that I went for the interview just because of her and not because I wanted to leave the ministry.

I performed well in the interview and was given the position at the Authority. That is how I joined the Authority where we set it up from scratch with my colleague Sarah to the point of being currently automated. When I was recognized by being given an award for employee of the year during the end-year staff party in 2020, this was a high moment for me as it felt great to be honored.

You must have faced some challenges in your career path. What challenges did you face? How did you address them?

A key challenge I encountered and clearly remember was when I worked at the ministry. At one point I had difficulty with my boss. I felt that he was not fair in terms of opportunities for training and development and granting leave. There was a season where I hardly went on leave and was extremely fatigued. I was the only one at the registry trusted with the sensitive records. As much as I was able to gain the trust of my supervisor, this did not work to my advantage. While my colleagues went back to further their education and were sponsored by the organization, my sponsorship requests were denied. I however, did not give up and enrolled for a Diploma course at the Kenya Polytechnic currently the Technical University of Kenya. During this period, things changed for the better with the leadership of the organization and I was allocated a new supervisor

who recognized my good work and recommended that I receive sponsorship for my tuition fee for the remaining terms of my Diploma course. This action deeply motivated me to continue performing my work better.

You have said that you have been at CAK for 12 years. How would you describe the work environment and culture here? Are there aspects that you suggest should be improved?

The work environment and culture at the Authority are very good more so amongst the non-management staff. It is very easy to seek assistance without struggling with colleagues. At my age, I sometimes encounter challenges with technology issues but whenever I call upon a colleague, they are always ready to help. My colleagues make me feel younger than I am despite being older. I have also learned a lot of things from them. I do not regret moving to CAK as I cannot compare myself with the colleagues, I left at the Ministry based on the skills I have gained and the things I have learned while here. However, my observation of the Management team, is that they are not united and have separated themselves from the rest of the staff members. I would suggest they integrate and work with the non-managerial staff and not segregate themselves.



Did you feel you had the necessary support and resources to perform your job effectively?

I cannot complain because I received adequate support from my Manager and colleagues, and we never lacked resources for the registry.

Hesbon, any time I walk past your office, I find colleagues here. How would you describe your relationships with your colleagues and supervisor?

My relationship with colleagues has been very good. I'm an open-minded person and I speak things as they are and many times you would find colleagues and even people from outside coming to seek help or advice from me. I also have a very good relationship with my manager Ms. Ninette Mwarania. I got to understand and learn how to communicate and relate with her and since then she has always been supportive even when it comes to airing concerns about the registry during the management meetings. She is easy to talk to and does not take our feedback negatively but instead reaches out to us at the registry whenever she needs to confirm or consult on registry matters.

There's always an opportunity to improve the way we do things. What changes would you recommend to improve the records unit?

I believe the records unit is currently functioning well. My recommendation would be to continue supporting the staff members who will be in charge more so Ms. Sarah Chege.

You were part of the team that spearheaded the digitization of the Authority's records. Briefly share your experience including learnings and challenges encountered in the process.

We went for a retreat to work on the system and people were grouped as per their department to work on their departmental processes. It seemed difficult at the beginning but my colleague and I sat with the developer and we were able to understand what was expected of us. We put our registry processes in a simple chart on paper and this is what we presented before the team. Other departments equally made their presentations but ours stood out because it was simple and it enabled the developer to understand how to layout the platform for the Authority. After that workshop, we closely worked with the developer all through the system development period until he handed it over fully to ICT. After the system was fully functional, we still had challenges where some staff members would come to the registry and insist on accessing the old files as they did not feel competent enough to use the CMS. Over time, other members of staff would always consult Sarah and me on how to navigate through the platform. I'm happy to say that colleagues are now competent with the platform and no longer use the physical files unless when necessary. The platform has since made registry work easy and more efficient.

Is there any critical information or insights you would like to share to help your successor?

I would like to advise my successor to take an interest in understanding the registry operations and also learn how to engage with people, not only colleagues but also external stakeholders. He or she should have good communication skills. I would also like to encourage them to embrace teamwork. Registry is connected to all the other departments hence they should know how to work well with people more so with Sarah Chege.

What are your plans after retirement? Do you have any advice for those of us continuing at CAK?

I have been making investments in my farm including purchasing a tractor to aid in the farm. I have intensified my efforts towards preparing my farm for planting in anticipation of retirement, in the last few months. I, however, encountered some challenges but I'm very optimistic that my plans and intentions at farming in the village will be successful and will keep me busy once I retire. On the same breadth I'm authoring a book that will document my life journey all through my childhood, education and professional life, the book is called "Mushukhani Registry". To the colleagues I'm leaving behind, I would just like to advise you to work as a team and support each other in your assignments.

