



Monthly Newsletter

JULY EDITION

2025



*Featuring Our Past
Womenpreneur
Pitch-a-Ton Winners*

Read more on page 3...

Interesting Topics

- Dream Big, Pitch Bold! Womenpreneur Pitch-a-Ton Season 7 is here!
- Dear Rainy Season, We Came Prepared This Time!
- Acting Like a Manager, Earning Like an Intern?
- Be Seen, Be Heard and Be Paid

Table of *Contents*

2

Dream Big, Pitch Bold! Womenpreneur
Pitch-a-Ton Season 7 here!

5

Dear Rainy Season, We Came Prepared this Time

7

Brunch, Bonding & Beautiful
Memories With Your Girls

10

Acting Like a Manager, Earning Like an Intern?

13

Be Seen, Be Heard and Be Paid

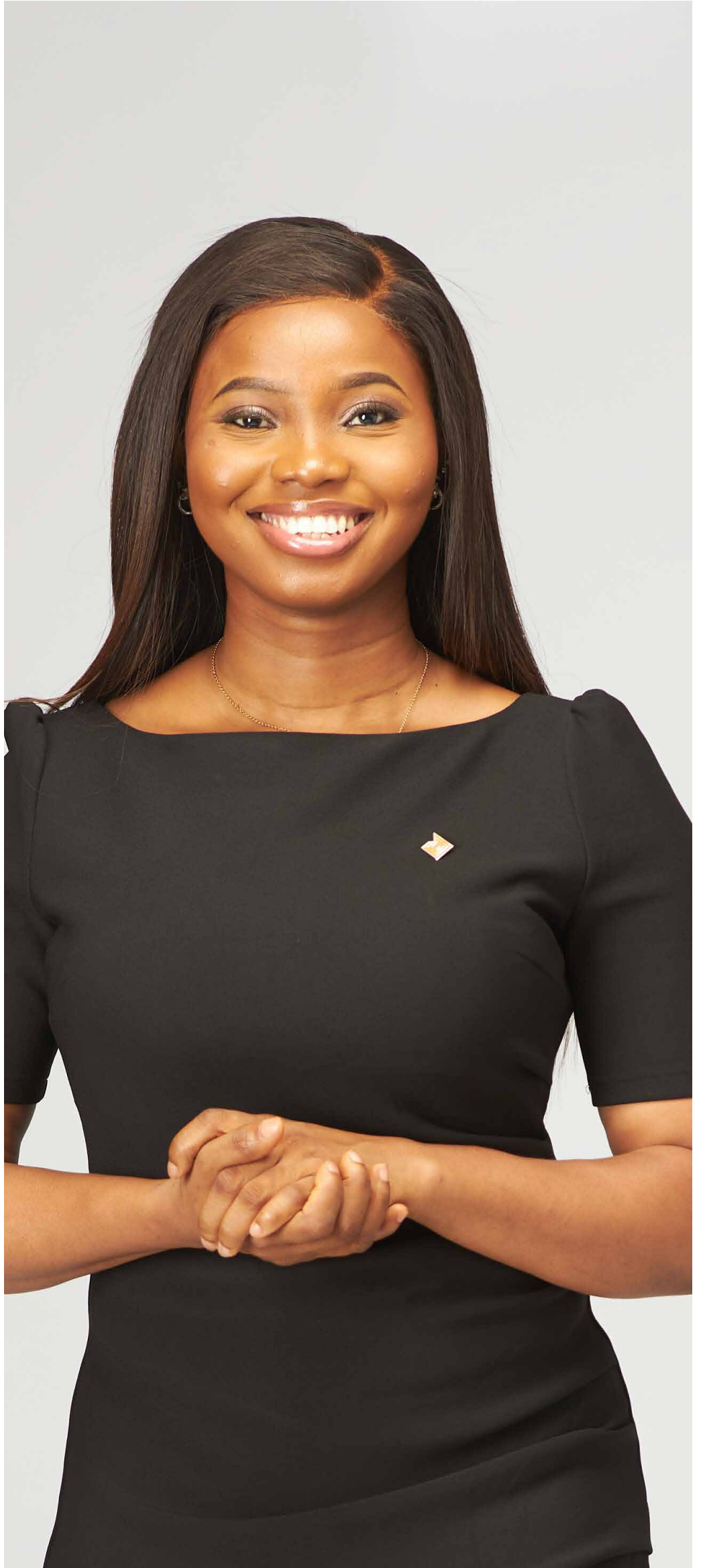
15

Events Corner



Hello Ladies

Happy New Month! We officially welcome you to the second half of the year. A wise philosopher once said, “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.” Maybe the first half of the year didn’t go as expected, what matters now is that you are still becoming and you still have another shot. July is a new invitation to pause, reflect and try again with deeper clarity. At the W Initiative of Access Bank, we know that every woman’s journey looks different and that is exactly why we show up; to remind you that you are not alone and you don’t have to figure it all out at once or alone. Last month, we had our Business Masterclass 4.0 — an impactful experience packed with insights and inspiration. If you missed it, no worries! You can catch up on all activities by following us on Instagram, Facebook, X (@thewcommunity) and on YouTube @ The W Initiative. In this newsletter edition, we are sharing stories, tools and powerful reminders to help you reset powerfully in your business, career, and lifestyle.





Dream Big Pitch Bold!

WOMENPRENEUR
★PITCH-A-TON★  *is here!*
season 7

At the W Initiative of Access Bank, we believe in the power, creativity and resilience of women entrepreneurs. This is why we created Womenpreneur Pitch-a-Ton, a program designed to empower, fund and celebrate the future of women-owned businesses. More than just a competition we are transforming lives through training, mentoring, visibility and financial support. We are helping women bring their business ideas to life and turn their passions into profits. Since we launched this program in 2019, it has become a catalyst for women-led business growth, because we believe that when we invest in a generation.

Our impact speaks volume.

Over the years, we have done the following;

- Trained over 645 women entrepreneurs through our IFC-certified Mini MBA, helping them grow their businesses, manage their operations and become strong contributors to their local economies.
- Disbursed more than \$175,000 in grants directly to women-owned enterprises, turning their innovations into reality.
- We're currently active in 10 African countries from Nigeria and Ghana to Rwanda, Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Gambia, Zambia and Sierra Leone, extending opportunity across the continent.
- Our collective reach extends to over 656,000 women who have accessed financial services, training, and support through The W Initiative.

The following women-led businesses stood out from thousands of applicants to emerge as first-place winners of Access Bank's Womenpreneur Pitch-a-Ton in Nigeria.



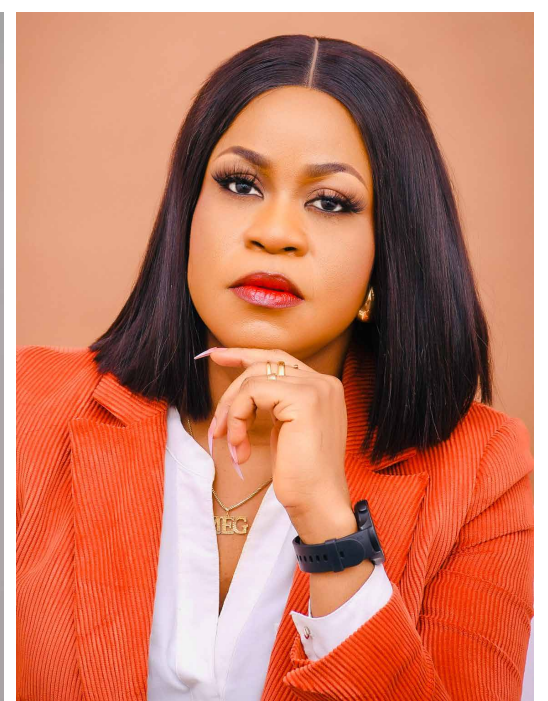
*Rejoice
Amarachi Usim
(2024 Winner)*



*Ololade Okedare
(2023 Winner)*



*Maryam
Adebola-Salami
(2022 Winner)*



*Margaret Obasi
(2021 Winner)*

- **Simkay Foods – Founded by Rejoice Amarachi Usim**

She launched her agro-entrepreneurial venture to turn post-harvest waste into nutritious, shelf-stable food products while helping thousands of smallholder farmers adapt to climate change through vertical sack farming. Today, Simkay partners with 22,000 farmers and processes over 150,000 metric tons of produce annually

- **Emerge Story Company – Founded by Ololade Okedare**

She launched her story development firm to elevate African narratives and empower emerging writers, particularly women—across the continent. Since 2022, Emerge has trained over 200 female storytellers from Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Namibia via its flagship conferences and writing labs.

- **Mo Baby – Founded by Mariam Adebola Salami**

She launched her brand with a mission to create safe, natural, health-focused solutions for mothers and families. Mo Baby’s carefully crafted, baby-first products give parents confidence in what they bring home.

- **Maziza Foods – Founded by Margaret Obasi**

She launched her wellness brand to simplify healthy living, using 100% organic coconut products to help women manage weight, prevent diabetes, and live better. Through locally sourced ingredients, Maziza brings nature straight to your kitchen.

Their success stories continue to inspire a new wave of female entrepreneurs across Nigeria. Now it’s your turn. Season 7 of the Womenpreneur Pitch-A-Ton is underway and this could be your moment to shine.

Here’s what’s in store:

- 120 finalists receive an IFC-certified Mini-MBA and 8 weeks of tailored training
- Millions in grant funding to turn your ideas into impact
- Unmatched visibility, expert mentorship, and real-time feedback from experienced juries

Applications will open soon! Don’t miss this opportunity to scale up your business! Kindly send us an email for more enquiries or information, at ***wcares@accessbankplc.com***

Dear Rainy Season,

We came prepared this time!



There's something about the rainy season that many of us love; the cool breeze after a long day, the soothing sound of rain falling on rooftops and the perfect excuse to cozy up with a bowl of pepper soup or a good movie. Even the sleep also hits differently; it is deep and refreshing. But as much as the season brings comfort, it also comes with challenges we shouldn't ignore: flooded roads, traffic jams, power outages and an increase in illnesses like malaria and waterborne diseases.

More Rain Equals More Mosquitoes

Stagnant water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes, a leading cause of malaria. Clear out gutters and puddles around your home. Sleep under a treated net and stock up on repellents. If you feel unwell, don't self-medicate. Please visit the hospital for treatment.

The Roads Can Be Rough

Flood-prone areas worsen during heavy downpours. Vehicles easily break down, bikes tip over and traffic becomes unpredictable.

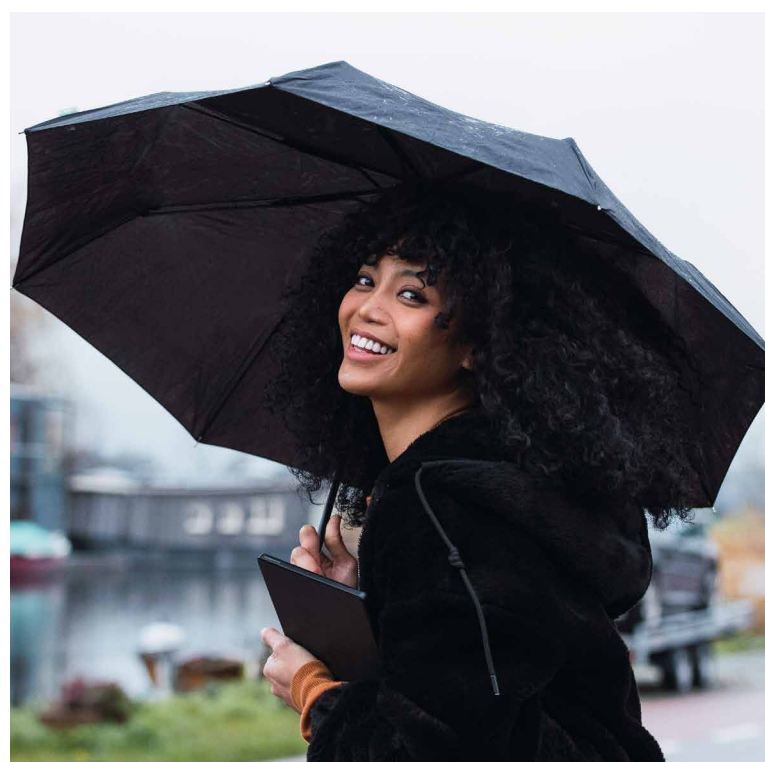
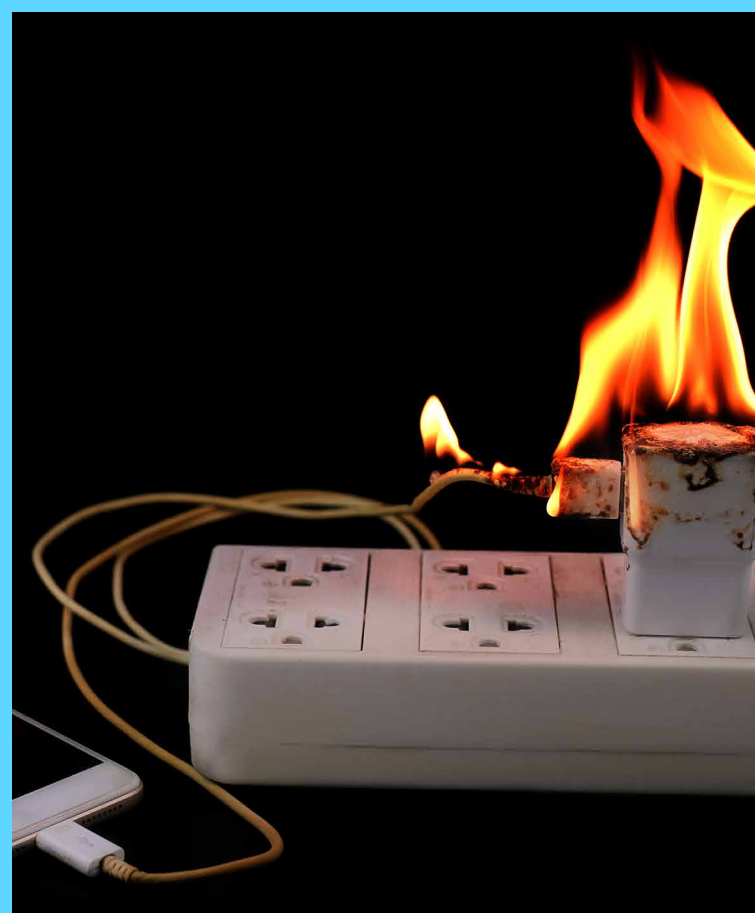
To avoid stress;

- Check traffic and weather updates before leaving home.
- Keep extra clothes, spare shoes and an umbrella in your car or bag.
- Stick to familiar routes and slow down when driving.
- If the rain becomes intense, pause or adjust your plans. Your safety comes first.

Dear, Rainy Season, We came prepared this time!

Power Surges Are Common

The combination of rain and unstable electricity can damage your devices and in worse cases, it can cause hazards at home or the office. Please ensure you unplug electronics when not in use and fix any exposed wires or faulty sockets promptly.



Don't Let Your Outfit Betray You

This is not the season to wear floor-length trousers that'll soak up water or delicate fabrics that stain easily. Opt in for darker colours that can hide splashes, quick-dry fabrics that won't cling uncomfortably and clothes with shorter or tapered hemlines to avoid soaking. If you're stepping out, consider a light jacket, a scarf for warmth and non-slip shoes that can handle slippery floors. Keep an umbrella in your bag or car, protect your phone with a waterproof pouch, and wear shoes that are safe on wet ground.

Small Leaks Can Become Big Problems

If there's a tiny leak you've been ignoring in your ceiling, please give it some attention as it can damage your ceiling, electronics, or wardrobe tomorrow. Patch up leaks quickly and keep important items off the floor. In conclusion, we may not control the weather, but we can control how we. Being aware is good but it's how we act on that awareness that really makes the difference. Stay prepared, stay safe and keep showing up for yourself.





Brunch, Bonding &

Beautiful Memories With Your Girls

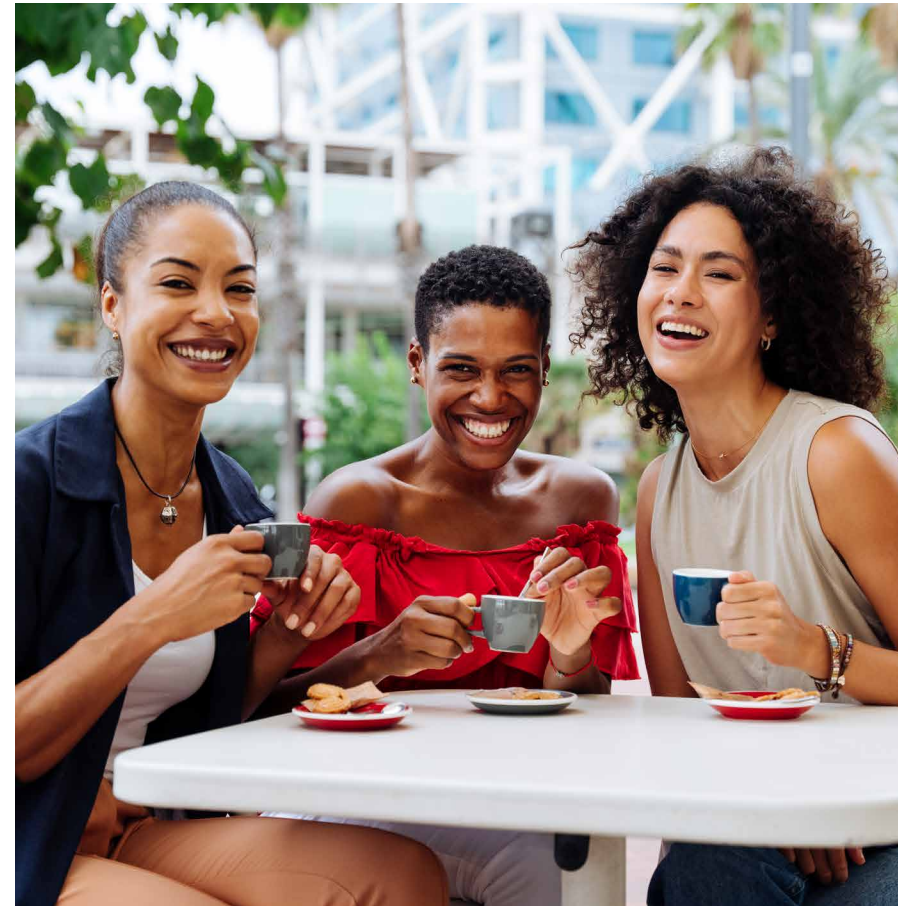
Friendship really is one of life's sweetest gifts. It's that safe space where we can laugh, vent, cry and just be ourselves, no explanations needed. But with everything life throws at us—motherhood, work, building a business, trying to hustle, it is easy for those friendships to slip through the cracks. Still, there are people who remind us of who we are, lift the weight when it gets too heavy and bring joy into our everyday chaos. Why not take out time to celebrate them this July, where we celebrate the International Day of Friendship on the 30th? Catch up with your girls and make new connections over some fun activities. Let's show you simple ways to enjoy real-time together.

Brunch, Bonding &

Beautiful Memories With Your Girls

Brunch with Your Girls

There's just something special about sitting around a table with your girls; catching up, laughing out loud and sharing food that feels like a hug. Pick a spot you've all been wanting to try or keep it cozy at home with homemade pancakes and fresh juice. You could even cook together! One person handles the eggs, someone else flips the pancakes and another makes the playlist.



Girls' Night In

Sometimes there's nothing better than staying in with your friends. Consider organising a spa night with face masks, bath bombs and scented candles, a games night with board games, trivia, or charades, a wine-and-paint evening, where you each follow a tutorial or a potluck dinner where everyone brings their favorite meal to share.



Brunch, bonding &

Beautiful Memories With Your Girls

Adventures Together

You can plan a mini getaway with your girls. It doesn't have to be anything fancy, just something to break routine and create memories. It could be a weekend at a beach house or a road trip to a nearby town where you all unplug and unwind. If it's too late for a full trip, plan for a nature walk, visit an art gallery, or explore that cute café you've all seen online. The goal is to step out of your usual environment and bond again.



Recreate an Old Memory

Think back to the early days of your friendship — that trip, that restaurant, that inside joke you still laugh about. Why not relive it? Go back to that spot, recreate a photo, or wear something that reminds you of that time. Nostalgia has a way of strengthening bonds and reminding us of how far we have come together.

Truth is, life doesn't slow down and that's exactly why we need our friends. They remind us who we are when everything else feels like too much. So this Friendship Day, take a little time to be present. It doesn't have to be perfect. Just honest, intentional, and from the heart. Because when we make space for each other, we make life lighter and a whole lot sweeter.

The

SMART WOMAN CORNER



Acting Like a Manager, Earning Like an Intern?

Last month, we asked: *“When staff steal money, who is really to blame?”* and the community gave really amazing answers! Now this month, we’re going straight to the corporate corridors.

Months turned into years, Reni has been acting in place of her manager, handling high-stakes meetings, overseeing bigger projects, leading a team and doing all the work expected of someone in leadership. At first, it was temporary. “Just hold the fort,” the management said when her boss left unexpectedly. She kept showing up, stretching herself, delivering results, hoping the recognition and pay would follow. But months turned into years but the promotion never came. No official letter. No salary adjustment. Just expectations that kept increasing. “They call me Manager now,” she said. “But my account balance didn’t get the memo.” She loves her job, but the pressure is real, rising rent, family obligations and higher transport costs. It’s taking a toll emotionally and financially.



What Should Reni Do?

Side A: She should have asked for clear documentation or declined the role without official confirmation. No letter, no new workload.

Side B: “It’s not that easy. Saying no could look like you’re not a team player. Sometimes, you take it — hoping your sacrifice will speak for you.”

What Really Went Wrong?

- Is this a case of poor communication from leadership... or poor boundaries from Reni?
- Are women too trusting... or too afraid to ask for what we deserve?
- Does loyalty always have to come at a cost?

HAS THIS HAPPENED TO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW?

Tell us how you handled it or how you would have wish you did. Head over to our Instagram or Facebook page @thewcommunity and share under our Smart Money Challenge post.

We’ll feature real stories in next month’s edition.

Ladies,

This is your friendly Smart Money notice that the cost of business registration is going up by August 1st! If you've been putting off registering your business, now is the time to act. Whether you're baking from your kitchen, running an online store, freelancing, or building the next big brand, registering your business gives you legitimacy, access to funding, grants and peace of mind. But why pay more when you can lock it in now? Register your business before August 1st and avoid the price increase. Don't let procrastination cost you extra. Your business deserves to be recognized and protected the smart way. The W Community has resources to guide you. Let's make sure your hustle is not just smart, but legal and future-proof.

Kindly click here to get started.

<https://forms.office.com/r/5nyfGyYawG>

Take action today. Your business, your legacy, your rules.



July 2025 Self-Care

BINGO

Take a sunset walk

Write down 3 things you're proud of

Do something you've been avoiding

Do something you've been avoiding

Try a new healthy recipe

Listen to your favorite song

Listen to your favorite song

Unfollow account that drain you

Spend 30 minutes reading

Get a good night's rest (8 hours or more)

Stretch or do yoga for 10 minutes

Create a new affirmation

Hydrate drink 2L of water today

Spend time with someone who brings you peace

Celebrate a small win

Buy yourself something small just because

Write a letter to your future self

Take a break from social media for a day

Light a scented candle

Smile and say "I appreciate you" to yourself

Eat your favorite meal without guilt

Spend 15 minutes journaling your thoughts

Spend an hour in nature

Do something kind for someone else

Do something creative (paint, draw, garden, scrapbook)

Check them off as you go, color in a circle, or celebrate each small win! Challenge yourself to complete a row, column, or even the full card by July 31, 2025!

Be Seen, Be Heard and Be Paid



Maybe the first half of the year didn't unfold the way you hoped. Maybe you were surviving more than thriving, juggling too much? or waiting for the "right time" to achieve your goals. Don't feel down because there's still time. You still matter and the rest of this year can look completely different but that's if you choose to show up differently. We are done playing small. No more hiding behind humility, second-guessing ourselves, or shrinking to fit. This season, we're stepping forward; boldly, audaciously but with presence.

Be Seen — No More Hiding in Plain Sight

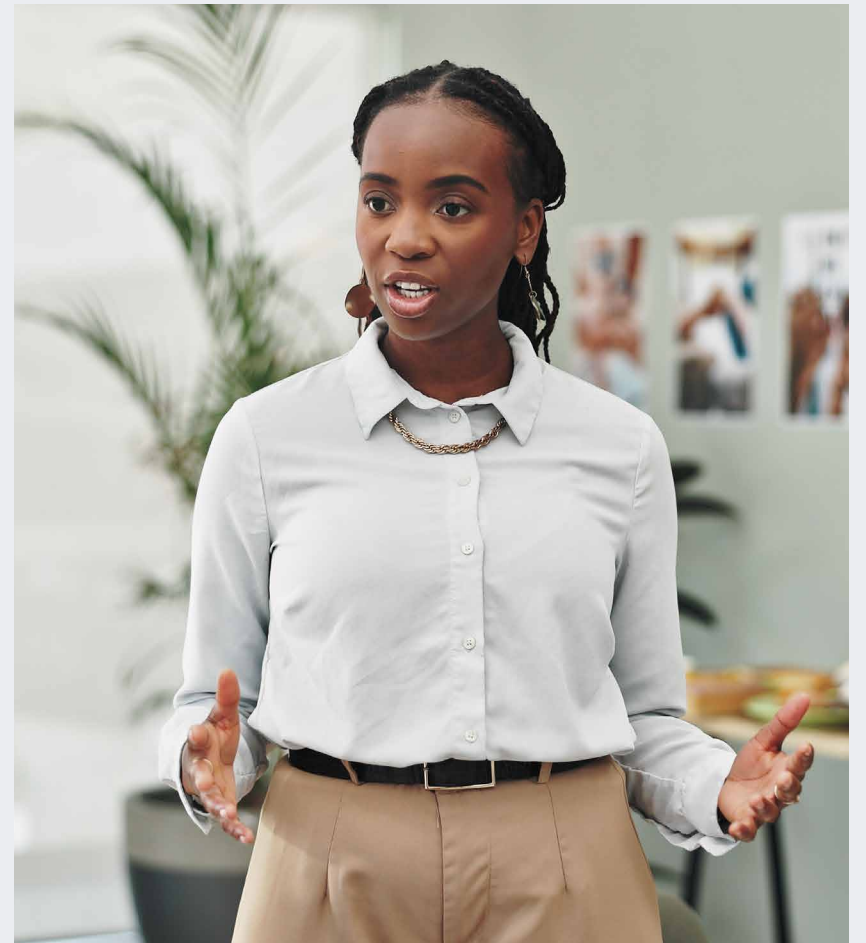
You don't have to earn the right to be seen. Whether it's in your workplace, your home, or your industry, your presence matters and it's time to own that. Step into rooms where you once stayed quiet. Talk about your achievements without downplaying them. Share your story, not because it's polished, but because it's powerful. Visibility is showing your value. If they can't see you, they can't support you.



Be Seen, Be Heard and Be Paid

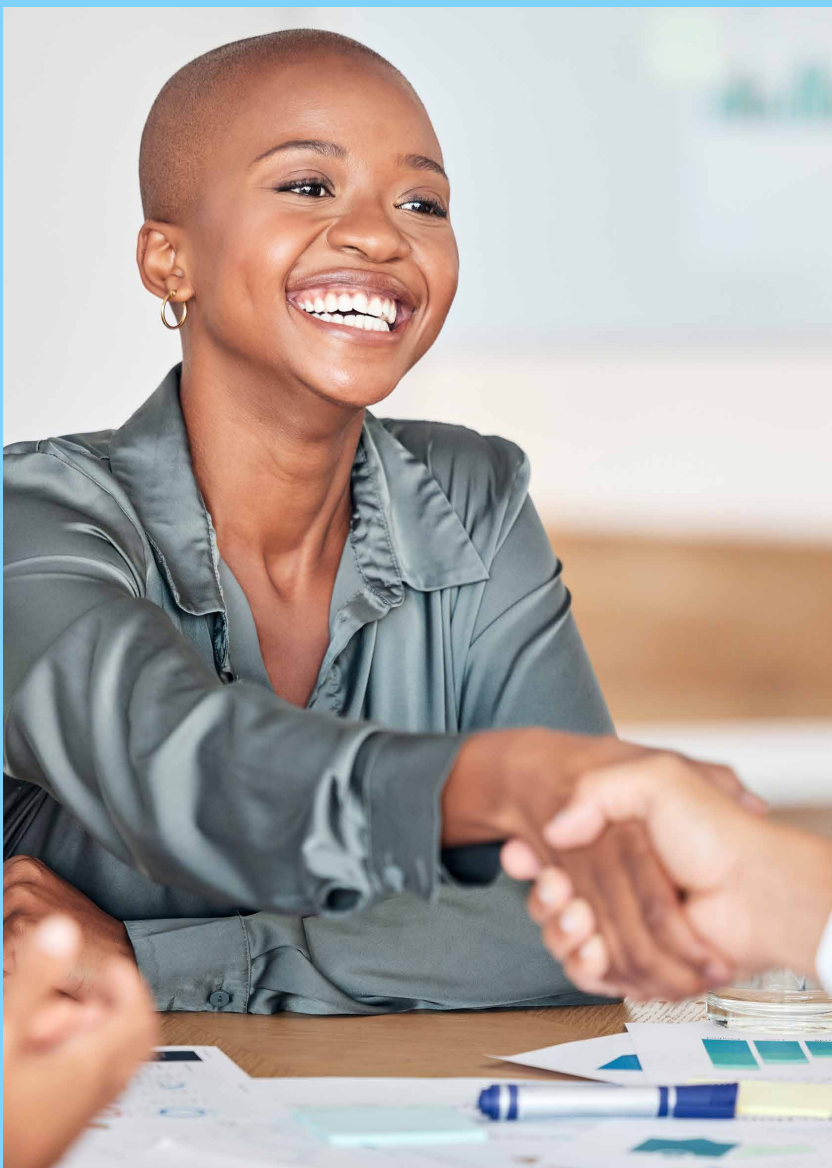
Be Heard — Let Them Feel Your Presence

How many times have you swallowed your words, second-guessed your ideas, or played it small just to avoid being labeled as “too much?” How many times have you held back what needed to be said, because you felt it might not make sense? Enough of that. Speak even if your voice shakes. Say what you mean without padding it with “just” or “maybe.” Set boundaries that protect your peace. Your voice isn’t too loud, too bold, or too much. Your voice is powerful, important and it deserves to be heard. The world needs your touch!



Be Paid — In Every Sense of the Word

Be paid, not just in money, but in opportunities, peace, joy, respect, time and credit. This is not the season to keep giving your best and getting the bare minimum in return. Whether it’s at work, in your business, your home, or your community, it’s time to stop doing the heavy lifting while others walk away with the reward. Ask for more strategically. Let this be the year you get compensated in full — for your effort, your presence, your brilliance. The second half of the year is a brand new chapter. A fresh page. A chance to show up with renewed clarity and courage. So step forward. Speak up. Shine out. Let the world experience the woman you’ve always been, the one with fire in her spirit and purpose in her steps.



EVENTS CORNER

Level UP Empowerment Program

The W Train stopped at four locations last month, we visited the following communities (Abakiliki) Ebonyi, (Kura) Kano, (Kumo) Gombe, (Abeokuta) Ogun. We empowered over a thousand women in each location with Financial literacy trainings in partnership With ImpactHer and diverse skills training on confectioneries, tie and dye, soap making and much more. Some women were also equipped with W starter packs to put to work what they have learnt to start a business

Here are some of the pictures from the event.

Level UP Kano



EVENTS CORNER

Level UP Gombe



EVENTS CORNER

Level UP Ogun



EVENTS CORNER

Level UP Ebonyi



Note

From a W Team Member

Hey Queen,

Can you believe we are halfway through the year already? If you are like me, this is the time you pause and whisper, “How can I make the best from the next six months of 2025?” Maybe your business goals feel behind schedule, you are confused about your career path or life simply got “life-ing.” Pause. Breathe. Realign. You’re not alone. The year is not over. You still have time to reset, re-strategise and finish strong. This is your reminder that progress doesn’t always look perfect, but consistency always wins. And as you chase those goals, please, take care of yourself too. Rest is part of the strategy. Your business or career needs you whole, not burnt out. Your dreams need you healthy, not exhausted. We believe in your hustle, your vision, and your power to turn the rest of 2025 into your comeback season. Let’s go!

*With love,
Joy from W*



Joy Otor
Partnership & Propositions Manager



Bye, Ladies!

Thank you so much for reading this newsletter edition. We hope every story, reminder and truth you've read today stirred something in you. Start small if you need to, but start. You deserve to be seen, heard and valued, fully and without apology. The second half of the year holds fresh possibilities, but it also demands a fresh version of you not someone new, but someone more grounded, more honest, and more committed to her own growth. So go ahead and take up the space you've earned. Be louder if you want. Be softer if that's your power. Just don't shrink. Don't disappear. The world needs what only you carry. And as you rise, remember: we're rooting for you every step of the way. Until

Until next time, take care of you!





• *Inspiring* • *Connecting* • *Empowering*