

Opportunities for the Engineering Consulting Profession

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The Future

- Opportunities abound
- Foreign firm's understand the need to partner with Nigerian firms
- There is a general need and concern in this country to build professional capacity

Current Opportunities

- Aviation
- Downstream oil and gas
- Hotels, tourism and hospitality (e.g. Tinapa, Obudu, Protea)
- Housing
- Industry (e.g. Indomie, Chivita, NBL, Dangote)
- Telecoms

Evidence of Opportunities

- Construction boom
- Renovation boom
- Demand for world class standards
- Funding available to meet the right specifications

Upcoming Sector Opportunities

- Agriculture
- Mining
- Power
- Road and rail

(Highlighted at NESG 17th Annual Conference)

Factors Driving Change

- Population growth is stimulating demand for more infrastructure and utilities
- The economy is steadily expanding and looks to remain on course
- Increasing interest of foreign investors in all sectors
- Government is engaging more with the private sector; and, as a result
- Market forces are being allowed to come into play
- Response to current infrastructure and utility challenges

Some Upcoming Opportunities

- Agricultural processing plants (whether for the zones proposed by the Federal Government or for individual investors)
- Industrial plants (e.g. cement, furniture, textiles)
- Mining facilities and the supporting feeder rail and road links, housing and utilities
- Power generating plants and expanded distribution networks

Full Range of Skills Required

CAD Designers	Dam Engineers	Sewer Engineers
Bid Managers	Design Engineers	Structural Engrs
Bridge Engineers	Highways Engrs	Urban Planners
Civil Engineers	Land Surveyors	Traffic Engineers
Construction Mgrs	Mechanical Engrs	Tunnel Engineers
Cost Estimators	Power Engineers	Utilities Engineers

International v. Local Firms

- Large global firms (substantial corporations or partnerships) dominate the engineering consulting field;
- Nigerian engineering consultancies feel that they are not getting their fair share of the opportunities and the principle of joint ventures on projects is rarely upheld; so
- Domestic firms are not being encouraged through these opportunities;
- Domestic firms that do get an opportunity to work on projects do not get equitable financial and professional development value; and
- In years past, Nigerian firm invited foreign firms to work on projects but now it tends to be the other way round.

Why International Firms?

- Partly due to branding
- Partly due to access (offices, network)
- An element of snobbery, but
- Largely due to the perception that Nigerian firms cannot be trusted – ethically and technically – to provide quality professional services

To Operate at International Level

- Demonstrate good corporate governance including abiding by written ethical policies
- Have an effective management information system including a time recording and reporting system
- Assure effective quality control through appropriately documented procedures
- Routinely appraise staff performance rewarding those that perform well and sanctioning those that do not meet standards

Your Firm's Driving Vision

- Where you want your firm to be in the future?
- How you want it to be perceived in the future;?
- How do employees see their potential careers?
- How do you want your clients to perceive you and your firm?
- How should you manage all manner of stakeholders?
- What value do you want to leave behind?

Your Firm's Vision

- In writing
- Known and understood by all staff
- Must imply perpetuity

And requires and alignment of you firm's:

- Management and ownership structure;
- Work style and operations; and
- People

To win work, ask yourself:

- What have we invested in the firm over the past five years?
- Why are we small?
- Is there a serious intention to grow the firm?
- Are we perceived as having – or not having – the right experience?
- Do we have a specialisation that we can leverage?
- Will the business have continuity or will it die when the CEO departs?
- Has the firm been run and managed professionally?
- Do we look and act professional?

Above all:

- Can I demonstrate good corporate governance in my firm?

Collaborating with Foreign Firms

- Apply caution; deal only with reputable firms
- Your combined experience and your firm's local knowledge will help your joint bids
- Your firm's personnel will gain from working alongside engineers with international experience
- Collaboration will strengthen your firm's track record and credibility

Positioning for a Small Firm

- Maintain professional standards
- Employ people only on merit and pay competitive salaries
- Avoid taking on any work: focus on a specialisation
- Do your homework
- Avoid reliance on one or two people

Positioning for a Small Firm (cont)

- Build critical mass
- Foster working links with complementary firms of good reputation

Develop and Demonstrate Capability

- The right staff (relevant qualifications and experience)
- A professional looking office
- Up-to-date IT equipment and software for graphics, design and modelling, and project management
- Standard documented policies and procedures, including relevant checklists
- Appropriate project management and risk management methodologies
- Tools of the trade

Professional Staff

- As important as clients
- Proper recruitment and selection process
- Training and continuous development
- The right reward structure in place

In turn, these require that the firm must have:

- A strong HR function

To win work:

- Take care to fully meet bid requirements
- Objectively assess your firm's competitive advantage and take action to improve it
- Ensure you offer the full set of skills required and demonstrable experience
- Don't dissipate your efforts by chasing everything; be selective

Thank You
And
Good Luck!