



The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



2011 / VOLUME 107

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APRIL 23RD 2011

Interview with Engr. Iyo L. Okojie FNSE on Engineering Practice in the Oil Industry

Engr. Iyo Okojie is a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers. He has worked in the oil industry for about twenty-seven years and voluntarily retired from in 2008. After retirement, Engr. Okojie established his own firm.

E-Newsletter: *Can you give us a brief about engineering practice in the Oil Industry? How is Engineering practice like in the Oil industries?*



Engr. Iyo L. Okojie FNSE

Engr. Okojie: I think engineering practice in the oil industry, I would say it is a challenging one but the degree of involvement varies from one company to the other. Where I practiced, which is Shell Development Petroleum Company, engineers are actually given the opportunity to have hands-on in project management. Normally the conceptual and detail design up to 2004 were always given out to third parties but construction management is totally handle by engineers; but from 2004 we set up the engineering management center which gives now our engineers the opportunity to actually practice and develop skills in conceptual engineering and detailed design. The whole idea is that an engineer should be able to handle the life-cycle management of a project rather than just going to the field to monitor, write budget proposals and get approval as we use to do. Now in the technical aspect, there is emphasis. Emphasis was explained on the technical aspect of the work and that was when I left and I know that tradition is continuing. So what probably was missing was the linkage with the outside world. If you were in the oil industry, there is this; I don't know what to call it; an attitude that you were lucky to be in the oil industry and you feel nothing else existed outside. People come out and start to have some challenges about integrating into a greater society, even in the engineering family. When I was in the industry I actually tried to work on this because I was a vocal point for the Nigerian Society of Engineers and COREN and I made sure that our engineers integrate with fellow engineers in other industries and practice through a medium like the Nigerian Society of Engineers conferences and COREN Assemblies; and one thing, we made sure that we sponsor as many as we can to attend NSE conferences and COREN assemblies and not just attending but actually having meaningful participation. Some of our staff write papers and present them during technical sections at least at the time before I left. So by and large I think the industries have built up a lot of engineers technically. Most of the best brains tend to work in the oil industry probably because of the benefits and it was easy at that time to blend this set of engineers to be useful to the industry but one thing that has happened in the past few years about five-ten years ago especially with reference to SHELL, is

that a lot of our engineers, through the voluntary retirement process, let me say; were given the opportunity to go out and contribute meaningfully to other leading areas where the expertise is needed instead of just bunching up. A lot of Nigerians who themselves are managers of men and materials are allowed to go out through the voluntary retirement; a lot of them have migrated into other industries, some have set up their own industry and to the best of my knowledge they are doing well. For me that is the greatest contribution SPDC has made to Nigeria. Allowing the Shell staff that have been trained rigorously through the period of their stay in the company to voluntary retire when they were still very active and they are now contributing to other areas of Nigeria economic.

E-Newsletter: *What advice do you have for young engineers who aspire to work in the oil industries?*

Engr. Okojie: My own is, from what we saw when I joined Shell for example. There was what we call from cradle to crane. When you stay in an industry and retire in that industry, you should see that the world is now a global village. So my own is don't allow yourself to be bottled in the local politic of any organizations. Train yourself to be technically challenging. Train yourself as they call it now "global compliance" so that you can migrate, moving from one establishment to the other without any hindrance and the time to do it is when you immediately come into the company. Try and grow. The first six to ten years is critical. If you get the technical competence you require, you wouldn't have course to be apprehensive anytime the company wants to do whatever exercise they want to carry out and actually you will be motivated to move ahead and achieve the best you can achieve in life.

E-Newsletter: *Thank you very much sir.*



Engr. Iyo Okojie FNSE with Engr. Otunte Otuenh

Notice: The Financial Status of Port Harcourt Branch members of the Nigerian Society of Engineers has been published in the branch website. Members should visit www.nseph.org to view their financial status. For more details please call the Admin Secretary on 08033166865 or the Financial Secretary on 08033402204.

Also, members are encouraged to pay their property development levy as the Branch expansion is on going. Fellows are to pay N20,000.00 while Members are to pay N10,000.00

Photo Gallery: NSE PH Branch 2011 Business Luncheon Held At Hotel Presidential on Thursday 21st April 2011



Engr. F. C. Ogolo FNSE (left) & Engr. Prof. Y. O. Beredugo FNSE (right)



Engr. Dr. A. H. Igoni MNSE, Branch Chairman giving his opening remark



Senator (Dr) John Azuka Mbata, Chairman/CEO Monier Construction Company (MCC)



Sir Engr. E. Tom-Jack, Manager, Materials, PHRC

Burial ceremony of the Father-in-law of Engr. F. C. Ogolo FNSE, at Amiyi, Aba, Abia State.



Engr. (Wari-Alabo) S. Jumbo, Chairman, Business Luncheon Committee

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NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!

All members of NSE PH should pay their **Annual Branch Dues** of **N4,500** for **Corporate Members** and **N6,500** for **Fellows** to **UBA ACC. NO: 0234-031-0000962 (Port Harcourt Main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of **N7,500.00** for **Corporate Members** & **N9,500** for **Fellows** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank