

REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE, MR JUSTICE IVOR ARCHIE, AT THE SPECIAL
FUNCTION TO OBSERVE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS' DAY FOR JUDICIARY STAFF AT THE HYATT
REGENCY ON SATURDAY 13TH MAY 2011.

Court Executive Administrator, Ms Michelle Austin

Deputy CEA's, Mr Jerome Mark and Mr Anthony Cummings

Other members of the Judiciary's Management Team

Our very adept presenters and facilitators of the Association of Administrative Professionals

Our dear and very special guests of honour for today: our Administrative Professionals from all of our
Court and Administrative locations throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Colleagues and friends all

I want to begin by heralding this very special day, Administrative Professionals Day, 2011, and in so
doing, bid my own special welcome to all of you who have given up your Saturday, and have accepted
our special invitation to journey to this very special location, to be specially appreciated and honoured
by the principals of your workplace, the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. And just in
case you feel I may have been a bit repetitive in my use of the word special, I want you to know that the
redundancy was deliberate, because to quote a line from a song by popular dancehall artiste, Movado,
which I am sure you have heard so many times before: you're special, so special, so special, so special.

Administrative Professionals Day is meant to underscore just that. And you may well be saying that we
are a few days late in our observances since the day itself was on April 27. But I will also go as far as
suggesting, once again in the vane of another very popular and heartfelt seasonal saying: it's not the
things we do on Admin Professionals Day...but the things we do all year through. So whether we
brought you here last month, last week or yesterday, the objective would have remained the same: to
salute you as a cadre among our work complement without whom this vital national institution – the
Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago - will go absolutely no where.

Which brings me to the question, where do we truly wish this Judiciary to go? And how do you as
Administrative professionals fit into that journey that we truly wish to undertake, and have in fact
embarked upon?

Well, to begin with, beyond the light at the end of the tunnel is a place to which we should all aspire, a place characterised by high performing, professional establishments among which our Judiciary should remain a premiere institution, functioning solidly in an environment of trust and confidence of all our people, not because we are given to lofty ideals, but because it is what the national community desires and is constantly demanding of us.

That US, dear Administrative Professionals of the Judiciary, includes YOU, and that is why the international theme of this year's celebration of this very special day – ***equipped for the task...ready to achieve*** – is of added significance to the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago. The task at hand, the journey on which we have virtually set sail, is for the transformation of our institution into a high performing professional organisation which could only be achieved if all hands are on deck for the ride.

That ride is not always going to be plain sailing or smooth. Because we will be on the sea of change, we know that many will be watching the waters with great trepidation given the fact that change, most time, heralds the unknown which in turn is a natural stimulant of fear among human beings. It has been pointed out that our fear of the unknown in the workplace for instance, generates *anxieties about possible loss of power, loss of prestige or position, and loss of confidence that we will not be able to adapt to the dictates of a new environment.*

As we perceive a transformed Judiciary, be assured that your Management team does not wish to promote any such fear. Rather, we are excited by the changes and the opportunities that this new environment promises. It is an environment that is being shaped by the pervasiveness and ubiquity of forever evolving technologies that continue to eliminate the distance between time and space. What does this hold for you as Administrative Professionals of the future?

I was particularly interested in the analysis of young Indian student Depak Atri on this score. Reviewing what has happened in your particular professions over the last 20 years, he discusses the extent to which the role of the Secretary has changed into the administrative professional. And although he sees this trend continuing he suggests the job will become more and more complex and specialised, requiring sophisticated skills in high technology areas and other complex business processes.

Listen to Atri: *Some of the changes anticipated in the role of virtual assistants (administrative professionals) of the future will include an entrepreneurial approach. Future assistants will have to possess deep knowledge of management principals, have sound interpersonal skills and a great degree of technical aptitude. These skills will be essential as more and more functions become automated requiring virtual assistants to respond with a human touch that automation will eliminate.*

Future virtual assistants will have to acquire specialized training in budgeting, negotiation, planning, supervision and delegation. Another important field in which the future assistants will have to be adept in will be security of sensitive information, as most information will be transmitted electronically. Future virtual assistants will no longer be considered as generalists instead they will be expected to be specialists in day to day business administration.

I think I can say safely, in the context of the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the environment already exists for your graduation to such roles. Also, as a natural consequence of these developments is the arrival of the consumer of the 21st century: a new breed of customer who wants his or her information in real time. Whether seeking sales and product information or simply looking for support or service, the 21st Century customer, who who incidentally is also a TRINI, is not interested in why the manufacturer's process is incomplete. He or she simply wants answers right now, on the spot, and with minimum inconvenience to them.

Having to satisfy the demands of the customer of the 21st Century, therefore, is the rationale behind the transformation process, and in seeking to address this, what we did since we celebrated you last was to establish a special team to undertake leadership roles in that transformation process. The membership of that team has been given the task to kick-start the journey we knew we had to undertake. What exciting vistas this new trip has opened up for us so far. As we s we explored we began speaking a relatively new language, babbling terms such as **performance driven, value obsessed, innovation propelled** and **environment conscious**.

When translated, all of these, despite their apparent complexity, point the way down a simple path along which - as repositories of the trust and confidence of the national community - we believe we are

duty bound to steer the Judiciary if it has to become that high performing, professional organisation aligned with the changing demands of our society.

Our celebration today, therefore, is also an invitation to you all, not only to walk with us, but to talk to us also as we undertake this journey. The Management team as some of you would have heard during our visit to your respective Court locations intends to engage staff at all levels to assist us in refining our plans for the future of this organisation to which, I am confident, we are all committed.

As I ask you to stand by for that task, I want you to know how deeply appreciated you all are. The Judiciary is blessed to have such a cadre among its ranks. I thank you, and wish you a most enjoyable day.

I thank you for your attention.