

CHANGEINAFRICA BUSINESS MAGAZINE

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NETWORK

A portrait of Jane Egerton-Idehen, a Black woman with shoulder-length dark hair, wearing a white high-collared blouse with a brown and tan leopard print. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a solid purple color.

JANE EGERTON-IDEHEN

AUTHOR | TECH EXECUTIVE | SPEAKER

**FACEBOOK'S
HEAD OF SALES
MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA**



EDITOR'S NOTE

This month's Issue of CIAB Magazine features and interview with Jane Egerton-Idehen, Facebook's Head of Sales for Middle East & Africa.

Jane is an Engineer, Tech Executive, Speaker and the author of the book "Be fearless".

In 2019, Jane received the 50 Leading Ladies in Corporate Nigeria Leadership award. In 2021 she was featured as one of the Change Makers by University of Warwick. Her passion is seeing women like herself fulfilling their purpose and growing their careers. She has a history of promoting girls in STEM (science, technology engineering and mathematics), it can be traced to her undergraduate days when as a member of the International Institute of Electronics and Electrical Engineers (IEEE), she co-founded IEEE Women In Engineering Nigeria.

In this Issue, Jane shares her origin story and talks about her book "Be fearless"

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HUBERT NOMAMIUKOR
Editor-in-Chief



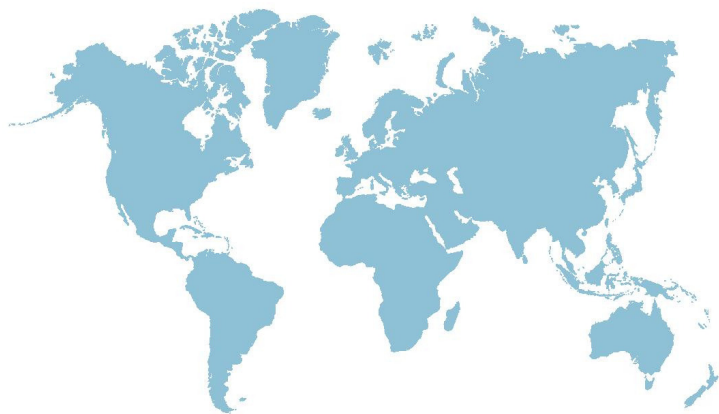
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- We offer mentorship programs
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- We provide diversity recruitment consulting

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- Sign up for [Job alerts](#) to be the first to know about jobs you care about in your area
- Don't miss our [Creative Summit!](#) Members attend for free.

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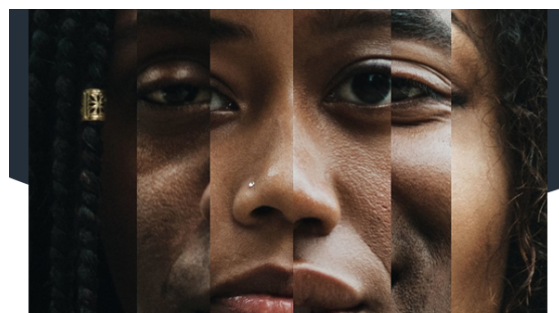
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JANE EGERTON-IDEHEN

HEAD OF SALES MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA FACEBOOK

Interview by Hubert N.

Photos by Jane Egerton-Idehen

Hi Jane. Thank you for taking the time out to participate in this Q&A interview. Please give us some insight into your background, initial career aspirations, and your leadership journey?

Jane: I went to secondary school at a boarding school, Federal Government Girls' college Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. I studied Engineering at the University of Nigeria Nsukka and later did an MBA at the University of Warwick UK. As a young Engineer I started my career as a Satellite Engineer with a Satellite Integration company called SPAR AEROSPACE. There after I worked with Ericsson and then Nokia Siemens. As a young girl I wanted to be an Engineer because I was driven by the challenge that it was perceived to be difficult. As I grew older most people thought it to be a male dominated field.

How much of your background and environment has influenced your journey as a Business Leader?

Jane: A lot of my background has influenced the way I see life. Being from very humble beginnings or a slum, gave me the passion to work with young people from impoverished homes. As a young woman all the reservations and resistance shown to me when I tried to study Engineering drove me to support young girls who seek a career in STEM (Science, technology , Engineering or Mathematics). As a grown woman, married and growing my career in technology, I saw many women leave the industry. Not because they wanted to, but because they were not given the right tools or support both within their organizations and society (Family).

This pushed me to start a non profit called "Women and Career" www.womenwndcareer.com. The goal was to support other women who seek to grow their careers and encourage more to remain and grow their careers in the sector they choose. Therefore, as a business leader my leadership has always being a result of me responding to situations. I found myself contributing to ensuring that others understand they can be inspired to live their best life irrespective of their environment or the situations they find themselves.



What inspires and motivates you as a Business Leader?

Jane: At different phases of my life I have been motivated slightly differently. Currently my goal as a business leader is to grow other leaders, influence my community and ensure that I leave the door open for others like me to have a seat at the table in platforms I find myself. In business you find yourself in various situations being the only person of your gender, culture or race, and I think it emboldens you to change that, to not just be a voice but ensure that others that are not represented (but qualify) find a way to have a seat at the table.

How much support have you received through your leadership journey?

Jane: I have had many angels (That is what I call them along the way). Many mentors both male and female have supported my career journey. I have had Sponsors who have used their power and influence to ensure I get a seat at the table and support from friends as well. It really takes a village to make this journey. From my Husband and kids who support me at the home front, to my friends who act as my board of advisors, the list can be endless.

What advice do you have for women aspiring to become business leaders like yourself?

Jane: My advice to other women is to remember that no two people share the same path, so own your journey, don't compare. Recognize that it is a journey so sometimes you move forward, sideways or it may look like you moved backwards as well. What is important is to keep your eyes on the ball (your vision) and keep moving. Just keep moving, make sure you keep working at things that bring you closer to your vision.



Please give us some insight into your role as Head of sales Middle East and Africa? Where does your role sit in Facebook's operations within Africa and the Middle East?

Jane: I lead and manage the sales team that handles our medium size businesses and clients. I do this for the Middle East and Africa region.

What is it like working for Facebook in terms of organisational culture and work life balance?

Jane: One of the things I love about the organization is its core values. The fact that people are open, Innovative and strive to build empowered communities is so refreshing. Individuals are encouraged to be bold. Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity are core principles of the organization. Having worked in several companies I must say I am truly happy to be in an organizations that aligns with my core values.

Let's talk about your book and being an author. What is your book "Be Fearless: Give Yourself Permission To Be You" about?

Jane: It is a book about my career journey as a woman in the technology industry. My goal is to inspire other people who would like to trade the same path and also motivate young people to follow their career of choice, by sharing tools and resources that helped me along the way.

How long did it take you to write "Be Fearless: Give Yourself Permission To Be You"?

Jane: It took me slightly over a year to write the book. I had been writing articles and publishing them in magazines and on LinkedIn until I decided to write a book.

Do you currently have any book launch in the works and what is the book about?

Jane: We are working on something, not yet formalized, hopefully would announce that in the near future.

We have come to the end of the interview and would like to thank you for participating in this Q&A session.

Jane: I am grateful for the honor of sharing my story with your audience. I am super proud of the work you are doing in the business environment.

UPCOMING SPONSOR EVENTS



About the Creative Future Summit

The Creative Future Summit is the must-attend event for Black on-screen and off-screen professionals committed to rewriting the narrative of creativity to reposition the power and influence of black originality.

The creative industry has long felt the influence and impact of Black creatives, from fashion to media to architecture. Black icons and innovators have and continually create products, designs, and art that leave a mark on history. Yet, this power, this influence is not matched with equality, financial equity or control of your own work.

For far too long, appropriation, access to opportunities, lack of recognition, and accolades, impact the black creatives & professionals. Given the past years' events on a variety of social justice issues, a brighter spotlight is being shone on the cultural, creative influence from Black creatives.

The Creative Future Summit will provide industry-leading insight and personal strategies to keep the spotlight on our community. The summit is designed to help creatives and professionals reignite their passion, advance your relationships and reconstruct your career for success. With abundant opportunities to expand and build your tribe, it's now the time to ensure the rebuilding of the creative industry is as inclusive, representative, and respectful as ever.

To get your tickets for the Creative Summit please visit [Our Creative Future Summit - Jun 25 | Hopin](#). The Creative Summit is free for BYP Network members, so signup with them at [BYP Network | Sign up \(byp-network.com\)](#).

It's time to....Rewrite the Narrative, Design Your Network, Change the Industry

MENTORSHIP

10 Benefits of Having a Mentor

Originally published on *BYP Network's* Newsletter



"A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself." — Oprah Winfrey

It can be so daunting venturing into the professional world without guidance. Personal branding is also an important factor in building your selling point. Whether sport, the corporate or creative fields, having a mentor would be ideal in boosting your potential and reaching the heights you want to achieve. So, what of mentorship, and what are the direct benefits of having a mentor in this day and age where personal branding is so key?

1. Understanding your field through their experiences

When seeking a mentor, it makes sense to find someone in your field who will coach you to becoming fulfilled. Maybe a brand, a job title, or a career within a realm you want to replicate, would inspire you to reach out and ask for mentorship as you want to emulate such a career path and brand style. If that is the case, you'd be able to get an idea of how to exist in such a space, gain insight into a specific field, and gain prior knowledge to give you a leg up. You'd also learn how to position yourself in order to make progress with what you want to achieve.

2. Skill Development

Developing a skill is all about experience, time, and application. We all know that affirmation, work smarter and not harder. Having a mentor would allow you to work with the smarts of someone who came before you. A mentor can help you identify the areas you need to strengthen, highlighting the skills you need to become better positioned for your ambitions.

3. Instilling Confidence

A mentor's relationship with a mentee is to inject confidence. It allows the mentee to understand their fluctuating emotions and viewpoints from experience that a mentor has gained to learn how to develop confidence in building their personal brand or business. Being able to contrast situations and positions makes a mentee's endeavours that much more realistic. It can also add another perspective. A mentor does not have to be one from the same field, but a person able to put life into that much more perspective. For example, Tiger Woods was mentored as a star golfer by his Father, a man who never picked up the sport. Though he taught Tiger how to live, how to assess life mentally, how to dedicate his time and position himself to become one of the greatest of all time.

4. Helps develop Leadership qualities

In a Forbes study, 80% of CEOs said they have had mentors in their career. Mentors have built them up to being worthy of such a position. The keyword here is mentors, as over their lifetime CEOs have been inspired by a variety of different people from different walks of life. Solely having one mentor who will change the entirety of your life and allow you to reach some amazing heights is a pipedream. However, allowing yourself to be inspired and coached by many mentors will give you a leg up in becoming a leader. You will learn how to manage people, clients, and organise your business. You will learn how to make decisions. You will learn how to take the lead and make hard decisions.

5. Enables a clearer idea of goals and your path

Having a mentor demands a sense of vulnerability. Although it may not be everyone's ideal way of being, and vulnerability may be absent elsewhere, being able to offload your challenges with a mentor allows the challenge to be tackled together. You shouldn't hide information from your mentor to appear tougher or more able, that defeats the purpose of the relationship. Great lessons can be learned from adversity more than making a show of your greatness, as the collective mission is to instil that within you no matter what. The vulnerability will help you address fears with your branding and business ideals earlier rather than later.

6. Enables a clearer idea of goals and your path

When you have a mentor they can help you to organise your goals. By committing to a mentoring relationship, not only are you building rapport and being more organised with your thoughts and time, but you build a clearer sense of self and ambition. While a mentor is rooting for you and giving you the keys to your greater self, they can also give tips for goal setting, identify routes to take for your path, and help you get a concrete idea of your future. A mentor can provide organisational hacks and facts you may never have considered. They also become someone to hold yourself accountable to.

7. Becoming constructive and optimistic

Although you shouldn't feel towering pressure, the respect of a mentoring relationship can make you much more constructive, goal-driven, and optimistic. You know what you need to do to get where you want to be, and mentoring alongside your passion can only make you that much more effective in daily life. Having someone who has accomplished what you want to achieve in your corner is a great grounding for growing.

8. Instilling a passion for your cause

Many mentors and mentees share a passion for a similar thing. For example, Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg, befriending each other as mentor and mentee, discussing the development of Facebook and Entrepreneurship. Maya Angelou mentoring Oprah Winfrey, guiding her through the most important years of her life. Warren Buffet and Bill Gates, Gates turning to Buffett's one-of-a-kind advice. They essentially followed the format of their mentors in becoming as great as them in their own way. Similarly, with a mentor we can recognise what it takes to become great within our cause. If there is a cause you want to commit to, find someone who has a similar passion, background and pursue that relationship to be inspired as they were.



9. Enables a clearer idea of goals and your path

In that same Forbes article that discussed CEOs and their mentors, the writer discussed how we do not need mentor relationships as much as we did before. Mentorship does not have to be direct and person to person, a figure could be your source of inspiration as well as the wealth of information we have. With the resources available to us by technology, the news, social media and such, we can be inspired by the people and companies we read about to trigger us to act.

For instance, some may use interviews, articles, books and writings to be inspired. Nipsey Hussle with his lyricism, entrepreneurial and community endeavours has been a mentor for me. Tony Robinson mentors many through his inspiring talks. Cristiano Ronaldo and his sporting work ethic inspires. Mentors can exist close to home or work for the causes you care for. A social commentator you appreciate, a willing and vocal professional or simply someone working on something you are inspired by.

10. New skill development

Lastly, through being mentored you will learn how to become a mentor yourself. After experiences with a mentor, or many mentors, utilising the resources we have available to us, plus drawing from our own experiences – we can positively mentor others. It also helps to generally mentor those in positions you used to be in. For example, mentoring a new recruit at work is a valuable mentoring experience, plus you are able to help another person. Or student to student mentorship. At the end of the day, the aim of mentorship is to become greater, learn from other people and positively impact and grow our networks.

Want to learn more on how to navigate your career, develop your skills and connect with like-minded people? Sign up to our newsletter [here](#).



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- Sign up for [Job alerts](#) to be the first to know about jobs you care about in your area
- Don't miss our [Creative Summit!](#) Members attend for free.

MENTAL HEALTH

Race Matters when it comes to mental health

Originally published on [BYP Network](#)'s newsletter



With Mental Health Awareness week and Black Inclusion week coinciding, I wanted to address how both causes are in fact interlinked and pertinent to business leaders as well as D&I professionals. On one hand, things seem to be looking up as lockdown rules are beginning to ease in the UK but on the other hand human suffering in many parts of the world continues on. Whether it's the covid surge in India, the loss of lives in Israel/Palestine, civil war in Ethiopia or revolution in Myanmar. The divide between East and West seems even more apparent with the ongoing 'vaccine apartheid' and for many people of colour; we are seeing the daily pillaging of our home countries and the toll this is taking on our loved ones.

Social upheaval has been etched into our collective conscience over the last 12 months provoked by the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent global Black Lives Matter protests. As a reflection from Mental Health week, I wanted to address how systemic racism both historically and in today's world can, and is, affecting individuals psychologically.

I want to talk about how companies can help, as well as some things to consider:

- Race and employee wellbeing perks - there has been a really positive shift from companies who are putting mental health at the forefront of their inclusion strategies. This could be from adopting platforms that monitor wellbeing to having therapists in the office. Research has shown that a Black client's experience can be misinterpreted by a white therapist and can lead to dangerous misdiagnoses. You can connect to counsellors from all backgrounds such as the BAATN or Black Minds Matter to create more inclusive mental health programs. We even have a seminar from Black Minds Matter talking about the subject of Black mental health.
- The onus to educate is not on Black employees - Here at BYP, we speak to incredible Black leaders from large organisations who single handily push and influence for more inclusive hiring practices when it comes to black professionals. The truth is we wouldn't be where we are without these trailblazers, however, please bear in mind that pushing for these internal changes is not the responsibility of your black employees. Ensure they are remunerated and hire people to carry on the programs they have set up. We hear constantly how mentally and emotionally taxing playing this role could be.
- Fund and promote ERGs - It's not always easy to create safe spaces around an ethnic identity in a white majority workplace. In many cases, ERGs do this for you, given that they are well funded and supported by the rest of the organisation. View our write up from interviews with 50+ BAME network leaders for more insight

Written by Meera Raikundalia
Co-Founder & Head of Partnerships at BYP Network



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