

Returnee Questionnaire

Name: Genevieve Puni



1. How long have you been away from Ghana?

12 years

2. Which country did you return from?

United Kingdom

3. What is your profession?

Human Resources Consultant

4. Did you gain any vocation/qualification before returning to Ghana?

I have Degree in International Hospitality Management, Masters in Hospitality Management specialising in HR, CIPD certificate in Training and Personnel practice. All this coupled with over 10 years working experience in Hospitality, retail, government & Non for Profit sector.

5. Did you learn something new that has influenced you now?

Yes to be very independent and not to rely on anyone and utilize your skills, knowledge and experience to the core because no one can take that away from you.

6. What prompted you to return?

When I left for the UK, I always had in mind to return to Ghana and impart the knowledge gained and be of service to others especially the younger generation who I believe are the future leaders of our beloved country.

I had the opportunity to work part time during term time and full time after school in the field I wanted to build my career in and after 12 years of progression, I realised I had under my belt enough experience, knowledge and skills to impart it onto our society one way or the other.

Also I felt after experiencing another culture/ society aside our very own, I had learnt a lot socially and imparting it in our environment could help change the way we act, behave and deliver services to people.

7. Why did you travel out?

I left Ghana due personal reasons and also to better my education because I had to wait for over a year to gain admission into the University and that wasn't a guarantee that I will sail through despite very good SSCE grades.

8. Have you had any challenges since returning to Ghana, i.e. reintegration, finding a job, accommodation etc.?

As someone who within the 12 years of living abroad, came back home for holidays regularly, I still faced lots of challenges when I eventually moved. It started with looking for work prior to the move which proved to be futile (one of the reasons for setting up an HR services company focusing a lot more on diasporas who want to relocate www.rectrain.com) and afterwards but on the other hand I was working alongside to set up the business. Most jobs in town seemed like you had to know someone before you can be pushed through.



I was very fortunate because I didn't have to worry about accommodation, got a lot of support from family and network of close friends although living expenses was so high as compared to the UK. In the UK you could go out all day and not spend a pound but here in Ghana you have to spend every time you decide to step out whether it's for business or pleasure reasons.

One big issue I had was easy access to information, strict regulations to for first time entrepreneurs and never ending traffic amongst others. It got frustrating most times when you are trying to do things by the books and not making head way. As they say it is a "place of beautiful nonsense" but I love Ghana despite all odds.

9. What would have made your return easier/smoothen?

If there was some information centre, link or better still an advisory company who will be able to help Diaspora's find work, opportunity to network etc. For me I had the full backing of my family and wasn't as bad as others have experienced. I did have a focus of setting up my own company should all efforts to find work fail.

10. Have you received any support from your family/state/friends?

My amazing family support has been overwhelming not to talk of people I have met through networking events etc. It will be nice if the state can work with companies to offer support to the returnees to make transition easier and also help them find work either before or as they return home.

11. Will you go back after your project?

No chance, I have set up an HR firm called Rectrain Limited (www.rectrain.com) and its going very well plus working on exciting projects with my friend who owns Ghanaian Londoners network (<http://www.ghanaianlondoners.org>). Everything we are doing is to help the future generation whilst enjoying our passion of giving back to society.

12. How do you expect the DSU to assist the Ghanaian Diaspora?

To work with companies/ support networks who can give support whether it's to do with work, social networking events, advice on Ghana etc to them prior to returning home.



13. Any advice and suggestions for potential returnees?

Come back but do your home work well before making the move. There are lots of opportunities in Ghana and you would have to be in it for a while like for 3–6 months to check out the system. It is so different to coming for holidays folks.

Also come home with a neutral mind instead of very high expectations of getting exactly what you have wherever you will be coming from. Things are not perfect but once you make your mind and stick with it, you will sail through. The toughest times are the first six months but once you sail through then the rest is follows easily.