

Friday
October 07th
2025

C-SUITE JAZZ

Stories Every Leader Should Read.



Written by Nassali Pauline

INTRODUCING THE JOURNEY OF A TRUE LEADER: DESTINED TO LEAD PEOPLE IN A GLOBAL MULTI-NATIONAL.

This is the story of my turning point, at the crossroads of the entry into the next chapter on my career, I sought transformation, shaping the finest qualities in me and those who aspire to lead.



Inaugural day

When I signed up for the *Journey to the C-Suite* program, I thought I was coming to learn about strategy, governance, and management. What I did not expect was the mirror it would hold up to my own leadership journey: the courage to face blind spots, the humility to relearn, and the conviction to step more intentionally into the leader I aspire to be.

Join me as I highlight the **top five sessions** and celebrate **three remarkable speakers** who inspired this evolution.



Melody Atim, Hilda Mwesigwa, Rebecca, Pauline at our very first Hi- tea ahead of our class.

As the cameras clicked and captured that now cherished photo, none of us knew how significant the moment would become. We were professionals from different sectors, backgrounds, and career paths, yet united by a common desire to grow into leaders who not only occupy the corner office but redefine what leadership means.

That image, taken on the balcony overlooking the city, now stands as a reminder of how leadership ecosystems are born. They don't start in formal meetings or structured strategy sessions; they start in the warmth of shared space, with humility and openness as the first agenda items.

The conversations were about where each of us worked. There was laughter, curiosity, and the kind of energy that only appears when people realize they're standing at the beginning of something meaningful. Not to forget, the gentleman in a white shirt later told us that he was the founder of Stingy Men Association.

I have shared below my famous quotes that I can leave you with from some of our facilitators.

“Do something today that you’ve been putting on hold. Your ambition deserves a chance.”- Pauline Nassali

“Find the tail that wags the dog”- Hassan Saleh

“Are leaders born, made or circumstantial?”- Elizabeth Ntege asked

Nassali Pauline

LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY

SEEDS OF GROWTH



Nassali Pauline- CHIEF OF STAFF-
COHORT1-JTC

A Moment Captured from Afar

There’s something powerful about watching leadership from a distance. A reflective photo taken early in our *Journey to the C-Suite* program captured not just faces, but posture, presence, and promise. At that time, I was merely observing learning quietly, watching how influence, character, and collaboration took shape.

Little did I know that soon, the view would change. I would step from the sidelines into the spotlight appointed as **Chief of Staff** for the cohort. It was a proud moment; one laced with excitement and the unspoken question that lingered:

“Now what?”



When Leadership Became Real

Leadership quickly revealed its weight. It was not about recognition or position; it was about stewardship. It meant being accountable for the team’s rhythm, presence, and tone. It meant carrying both the vision and the vulnerability of the group. Then came *Janet’s profound session on “Professional Hygiene of a C-suite Leader.”* She broke down the anatomy of executive leadership:

- **Timekeeping:** because respect begins with time.
- **Thinking big:** seeing beyond the immediate.
- **Financial reputation:** trustworthiness in every transaction.
- **Confidentiality** protecting what is privileged.
- **Personal branding:** aligning perception with purpose.
- **Communication:** clarity in message and manner.

The leadership tent by Mr. Paul Senyomo highlighted Character as the pivot of any leadership.



THE TRIO: Friends: Eva Nazziwa Lubowa (L), Nassali Pauline (C) and Melody Atim (R).

My Turning Point.

Ms. Elizabeth Ntege, Transformed my life. In her session on: "*Leadership as a calling*". A rework of my CV helped mirror my competence and character and today my efforts are channeled intentionally to fill in the gaps. Ms. Pamela Nantamba comforted me when she reaffirmed the position of when to say NO. I learnt that efficiency comes from when we learn the detractors and the value adds.

THE POWER OF THE FRONT ROW

Someone once said that “*your network is your net worth.*” If it wasn’t just me and Melody, then it was with Eva: a trio that became my anchor throughout the program. This bond carried us through the highs and lows, reminding me that beyond lessons and titles, it’s the relationships that define the journey.

If there’s one experience I’d leave you with, it’s this: create a mark at all times. We always sat in the front row, paid attention, and asked what Esther Nanfuma fondly called “*brilliant questions.*” We were each other’s biggest fans, but also each other’s checks: keeping one another accountable and grounded.

It’s these kinds of relationships you carry with you to the C-suite. As one wise voice reminded us, “*it is lonely at the top, and the runway is too short.*” – Marion Muyobo. You will need a **social structure that cheers you on** when you finally reach the end of that runway.

Friday October 07th 2025

C-SUITE JAZZ



Nassali Pauline.

PROJECTS THAT STRETCHED US.

“Stretch like a rubber band”- Jesse Ainebyona. He was not joking; this program is not for the fainthearted but those who know their why?



Mr. Magunda Baker: Our Icon

Our icon for the *Journey to the C-Suite* project was **Mr. Baker Magunda**, Chairman of the Board at Stanbic Bank. From his initials, we built our dummy company **B&M Co. Limited**, a name that not only honored his legacy but also echoed the industry he had championed. Naturally, we became known as **“The Brewers.”**

To make our project real and relatable, we brought the brewing experience to life for the entire class through a creative partnership with **Banange Beer**. It was immersive and a bold blend of leadership, innovation, and teamwork in its purest form.

Yet, as **Mr. Hassan Saleh** wisely cautioned, *“Every team has its dynamics.”* It didn’t take long before we experienced both the *attraction and the attack* of diverse personalities. Still, we persevered: weekly google meet calls kept us aligned, a potluck picnic kept us bonded, and our **Coach, Samuel Jjuko**, anchored us with his calm wisdom. Through it all, we learned that leadership is not about avoiding conflict but about navigating it with grace.



The B&M team: Patricia, Anna, Shine, Henry, Pauline

I remember one particular week when **Janet** gave us three assignments all with close deadlines. It felt unbelievable at first, but in hindsight, it was a glimpse of what awaited us in the real world. The pressure was intentional, and it became one of the most valuable experiences of the journey.

We immersed ourselves in peer-to-peer learning, icon presentations, and strategic leadership challenges: all designed to stretch our thinking. The exposure was immense: from telecom, finance, and banking, to procurement, legal, utilities, oil & gas, and construction. We learned how to prepare bids, powerful presentations, and interview pitches, translating knowledge into practice.

It was true, as **Mr. Paul Senyomo** and **Mr. Robert Mutebi** reminded us:

“You don’t fatten the cow on market day: you prepare early so that when the market arrives, you are the in-demand, scarce resource that stands out.”

The Transformation

Growth takes stages, the three month’s program at the Journey to the C-suite positively impacted our speech, authenticity, visibility, branding, appearance, teamwork and adaptability. The real test for this team was: *“What do people say about you when you are not in the room”- Bridget Kusiima.*

For this team to look as sharp in the photo below, it was presentation day and yes the nerves kicked in but they didn’t affect the look because: *“You never get a chance to make a first impression”- Janet N Bugembe.*

The judges of the final presentation were not your ordinary audience and yes you had to bring you’re A-game or go home.

These were great strides pushing all of us out of our comfort zones knowing a lot was at stake. We innovatively pulled out our strokes used an innovative application to create slides, came with a chess board to illustrate office politics.

Reader if you who were in that room you would tell that innovation has become the norm of the day and only the extraordinary make it highest.



The B&M team with Coach Samuel

“Do something today that you’ve been putting on hold. Your ambition deserves a chance.”- Pauline Nassali

“Find the tail that wags the dog”- Hassan Saleh

“Are leaders born, made or circumstantial?”- Elizabeth Ntege asked

SPEAK WITH CLARITY

It was in our very first class that **Patra Namulwa Higenyi** made a statement that set the tone for the entire Journey to the C-Suite program: *“In this class, clarity is paramount.”*

This newsletter may be limited to highlighting just three speakers, but truthfully, every single one of them left an imprint.

I’ll save the rest for the next edition. For now, I’ll start with **Melody Atim** and her unforgettable session on the *Built Environment*.



Melody Atim

Many might assume this is an obvious pick because she’s my friend, but friendship aside, Melody asked a question that shifted my perspective on leadership: *“If your buildings could speak, what would they say about your leadership?”* That question hit deep. It made me pause and reflect on the unseen walls around us not just physical buildings, but the environments we create for our teams.



Mr. Kasakya and Pauline

Then came **Mr. Moses Kaskya’s** session on Cultural Shaping and Organizational Transformation: a turning point in how I understood leadership from the inside out. He began with a statement that landed with quiet power: *“Executives have a responsibility of shaping the culture of an entity.”*

That session made me reflect deeply on my own leadership journey. I realized that every time we walk into a room, we are either building or breaking the culture we want to see. The tone of an organization often mirrors the tone of its leaders their words, their habits, their standards.

Thirdly, **Mr. Robert Mutebi** was highly practical, making reference to an excerpt. He highlighted that we should never do business we don’t understand because we shall not give the appropriate solutions to the clients.



Mr. Mutebi & Pauline

Mr. Mutebi challenged us to approach data with both curiosity and rigor, ensuring that every analysis is tied to tangible business realities.

SIGNATURE SESSIONS

Standing on the Hands of Giants

1. *SHIFTING MINDSETS FROM MANAGER TO EXECUTIVE:*

One of the most impactful moments in the program came during **Ms. Marion Muyobo’s** session, where we explored the **Johari Window**: a leadership tool that illuminates the intersections of **self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management**.

For me, this session underscored one of the greatest challenges leaders face: the shift from being a manager, focused on tasks and processes, to being an executive, focused on strategy, influence, and long-term vision. The shift requires not only a change in responsibilities but, more importantly, a transformation in mindset.

I had the opportunity to lead the class through the **Eisenhower Matrix**, helping the team prioritize urgent versus important tasks. The energy in the room was electric, contributions flowed effortlessly, and ideas built on one another, showing how executive thinking is as much about collaboration as it is about decision-making.



Marion Muyobo, Pauline, Shine and Patricia

Continued on page 4

“I think back to what Mandela did, how he united a country by wearing that green Springbok jersey -the jersey of his oppressors - into the stadium,”- Sean Fitzpatrick.

“In demand, Scare, Resource”- Robert Mutebi.

“The runway is too short” – Marion Muyobo.

SIGNATURE SESSIONS
(CTD)

2. CRAFTING YOUR EXECUTIVE PRESENCE



Pauline(L), Sylvia Mulomi ©, Melody®

I developed an acronym: PRVN from **Ms. Sylvia Mulomi’s** session and intend to use it in my next pitch. **P – Purpose:** why I do what you do, **R – Resume:** my track record and achievements, **V – Visibility:** how others see and recognize my contributions, **N – Network:** the relationships that amplify my influence.

This framework challenged us to articulate what makes us distinct and indispensable, even before opportunities arise.

I immediately connected this to **Mr. Robert Mutebi’s** session on **Leadership in a Digital Age**, where he emphasized identifying a **scarce, in-demand resource** to elevate one’s value proposition.

3. THE FIRE-SIDE CHAT



Jeniffer Musisi- "Nankulu" with the JTC class

Ms. Jennifer Musisi remains a true icon in the hearts of many Ugandans. Her fireside chat was more than a conversation;

listening to her brought goose bumps on the listeners skin, the suspense of how she dodged and resolved the corporate landmines was eminent. I would sit all night long at this lady’s feet just to tap on her wisdom.

It was a journey through lessons forged at the C-suite. She shared insights that resonated deeply: the power of clean desk discipline in fostering organization and clarity, the importance of generosity in leadership, and the art of work-life integration to sustain performance over time.

Perhaps most striking was her courage in making bold, principled decisions, including rejecting corruption even before stepping into positions of influence. Her story reminded us that integrity is non-negotiable, and that leadership is as much about character and choices as it is about strategy and skill.

4. LEGAL & CORPORATE PRACTICE ADVISORY- PRIVATE EQUITY IN ACTION



Nassali Pauline presenting at JTC

Ever heard the saying, “*Trophies are not kept under the bed*”- **Denis Kyozi**. I proudly write about my peer-to-peer session dissecting the history of law while connecting it to emerging areas, particularly in private equity which is my daily area of practice.

I explored how private equity is often introduced into companies through debt,

equity, and recapitalization, all carefully structured and protected by contracts, convertible notes with specific step-in rights, personal guarantees, and robust default and recovery clauses.

5. WABI SABI



Mr. David Kaggwa

This session was famously referred to as WABI SABI, but the actual topic was on inclusive leadership and managing across generations.

Mr. David Kaggwa used pictorial images to show power struggle, submission, imperfection but points to servant leadership as the most effective.

In our presentation on office politics as a strategic leadership challenge his class came in handy to show the traits and character of leaders who are best placed to curb negative politics.

Using Nelson Mandela’s image, he refers to the MADIBA MAJIC to resolve all shortcomings: To let go of bitterness, peace v right, leaders speak last and servant leadership.

Dear Leader, I will leave you with Simon’s Sinek’s book: **Leaders Eat Last**.

“Make your ambition known to those who matter.”- Sylvia Mulomi

“ Refuse to be corrupt before you enter places of influence”- Jeniffer Musisi

“ Does the Crested Crane know it is on the currency”– Janet N. Bugembe.

A HEARTFELT APPRECIATION

As my journey through the **Journey to the C-Suite (JTC)** program comes to a close, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to all those who made this experience truly transformative. To Janet, I can proudly say I am walking on the wings of giants.



Janet Navuuga Bugembe

To **Janet Navuuga B**, the visionary founder of JTC, thank you for creating a platform that challenges, inspires, and equips aspiring executives to rise to their full potential. To **Patra Higenyi**, the incredible program manager, your guidance and clarity kept us focused and intentional throughout. To **Daphine**, Janet’s right hand, your support behind the scenes made everything seamless.

A special note of thanks to **Irene Victor**, our gracious corporate host, and **Cathrine**, our tech guru, who ensured every session ran smoothly, and of course **Uncle Pirra**, the man behind the lens, for capturing moments that will stay with us forever.

To the facilitators who generously shared their experiences, sacrificed their time, and poured wisdom into every session your impact is immeasurable. To the judges and fellow executives who consistently showed up with energy, insight, and accountability thank you for creating a space that pushed all of us to grow.

On a personal note, I want to acknowledge my son **Lionel**, who supported me with power point work, and my leader, who never paused to question why I left early on Mondays: your support made it possible for me to fully engage.

This journey has been profoundly impactful, shaping not only my professional growth but also my perspective on leadership, resilience, and purpose. I have already begun applying these lessons to impact lives, and I look forward to celebrating many more success stories in the future.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.-**Nassali Pauline**



“The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.” – Ralph Nader