

NIGERIAN UNION OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS WORKERS – PETROLEUM TANKER DRIVERS UNIT [NUPENG - PTD]: WORKING FOR A LIVING AND SERVING THE NATION.

OUR THESIS.

The Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) is a union that means different things to different people depending on whom you are and what you do in the society. To a labour unionist, it's a part of the NLC with specific roles and functions in the national labour relations. To a market woman on the street in Lokoja, they drive tankers and carry petroleum products in the country resulting in many accidents. To a commercial bus driver that plies Calabar to Lagos, the fear of NUPENG marked tanker is the beginning of wisdom.

But the Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers - Petroleum Tanker Driver [NUPENG- PTD] himself, he is a simple ordinary Nigerian making out a living in haulage of petroleum products to the various destinations in the country and serving the nation humbly. He is exposed nationally to the effects of corruption, bad policies in governance, lawlessness of the normal Nigerian citizen and poorly maintained roads. The NUPENG - PTD member has to contend with these factors and safely move his wares in the country.

The public and the government rarely look at the constraints the tanker driver on the roads goes through but react sometimes vehemently when these adverse factors become impossible for the NUPENG - PTD driver and a mishap occurs. A NUPENG - PTD driver has enough considerations on the value of his ware which the tanker is conveying and of course the economic value of the tanker. More importantly he has a job from which he maintains his family and dependants. When he is on a trip, he expects to come back and receive commendations for a job well done from his family and his employers. These are important to any NUPENG - PTD member on the road.

However, the reactions of some state governments and the general public in most accident situations would seem as if every other condition is right [both the roads and human elements] yet the NUPENG - PTD driver goes out and looking for accidents. At the heat of the moment in accident situations you see some state Governors enacting new laws and edicts aimed at controlling the NUPENG - PTD movement within their territory. The general public is not even better off. Some will wish the NUPENG - PTD be banned in the country while forgetting the national economic role they perform.

Seminarmate believes that NUPENG - PTD is not as bad as they are portrayed in the country. Their work and national environment are neglected by the governments at

both federal, state and local government levels and most often they do not complain much.

The name NUPENG is a brand in itself. It has become a household name. The public relations activities of the union are varied and ought to be improved and protected.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF NUPENG.

NUPENG as a house hold name means different things to different persons depending on your circumstances in life within the country, Nigeria. Almost all the time, not a pleasant story to tell about NUPENG. The market woman in Lokoja, Kogi State has her own unpleasant stories to tell, different from a local motorist in Asaba, Delta State. In Kano, the man who lives in Sabon Gari with his family has a different unpleasant story to share about the NUPENG- PTD driver and his truck.

Within a space of seven days in Lagos State, recently, there were three cases of tanker accidents, with two resulting in loss of lives and properties amounting to millions of Naira.

The first at Iyana Ipaja, which occurred when a tanker loaded with fuel skidded off a bridge, got engulfed in flames and destroyed about 40 shops, four buildings, 25 vehicles and six tricycles [June 2, 2015. Vanguard]. The second at Idimu, about four days later, no fewer than 34 houses and 70 shops were consumed, after another tanker with diesel went up in flame crashing into a building. [June 2, 2015. Vanguard]. The third accident was at Ajah area of Lagos, where a tanker spilled its content. Residents around the scene of the accident were lucky, as the truck did not go up in flames. [June 2, 2015.Vanguard]. Another deadly tanker accident happened in Onitsha, Anambra State within the same period, killing not less than 70 people. [June, 3, 2015. FRSC]. Some residents and eye witness accounts commenting noted the indiscipline usually exhibited by the tanker drivers as a great contributor to the crisis.

Going further, tanker with fuel and belonging to Oando oil company fell off the flyover bridge at Ojuelegba igniting fire in that densely populated area of Lagos. The fire injured several residents and burnt part of a mosque as well as several cars and buses. The truck spilled fuel into the nearby canal causing the fuel tanker to explode and burn vehicles and houses around the area. [5th December 2015 Sahara Reporters, New York]. Looking back to the Oyo State tanker explosion which was one of the worst ever multi-vehicle accidents, killing between 100 and 200 people near [Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria](#) on 5, November 2000. The accident occurred on the road connecting Ibadan and [Ife](#) in [Osun State](#). Bad road and heavy traffic created the innitial congestion on

this stretch, before this petrol tanker, bringing fuel to Ifan, and travelling at high speed, suddenly encountered the traffic jam and attempted to come to a halt. At this point, the poorly maintained vehicle suffered a total brake failure, and plunged straight into the queue of cars ahead.

The numbers killed in the initial collision were probably high, but they will never be known, because the tanker, which had finally come to rest on its side had begun to leak its highly flammable load onto the roadway. Within seconds, the tanker exploded into flames, which rose above the city and devastated a wide area around the accident scene. Those still in their cars, trapped in the crash wreckage, or standing too close were immolated instantly, while those farther away were burnt to death or hit by flying shrapnel from the blast. Burning wreckage caused several small fires in nearby suburbs. The families and individuals so affected by these incidences all have uniquely unpleasant stories and experiences to tell on NUPENG-PTD.

NUPENG-PTD EXPLANATIONS AND POSITION TO THE PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT REACTIONS.

Over the years, countless Nigerians have been made to believe that petroleum tanker drivers are lawless, arrogant and constitute a monopoly in the service of petroleum products delivery. But NUPENG-PTD is a trade union that seeks to promote great economic, social and political development for the nation embedded on constitutionalism, accountability, justice, equity and fair play. Beyond the joint political activities of NUPENG and PENGASON between 1993 up to 1995 in resisting the military incursion in Nigeria, NUPENG has been a responsible union. "As a union, we make sure that before any driver is employed to drive petroleum tankers; such a person is properly trained. Tanker driving involves a lot of things which drivers of other vehicles are not exposed. The training exposes such drivers to the intricacies of tanker driving, the need for safe and cautious driving, among others". [T.N.A Korodo.17,October 2009.Daily Champion]. Any traffic accident is essentially dangerous, but one involving a moving vehicle loaded with petrol is significantly more dangerous. Just as safeguards are basic to the handling of explosives, the operations of petrol tankers also call for stringent rules, regulations, measures and actions by the government and the people. Was it poverty, greed or ignorance that made these villagers to embark on a suicide mission? Did they have the feeling that their action could result to death? Did they know the social ill involved in taking what does not belong to them, especially from someone already in danger?. In situations like this, NUPENG- PTD driver can not be blamed but the public.

SEMINARMATE'S INTERVENTION IN NUPENG-PTD.

NUPENG – PTD exposes her drivers to many trainings and workshops all aimed at making our roads and trucks safe. The trainings focus more on the technical and mechanical aspects of driving tanker trucks, and the driver's ability to observe traffic laws. Seminarmate however sees the NUPENG – PTD driver as a human being who should also be exposed to the Social and Psychological aspects of driving tanker trucks on our roads. We are interested in making the driver a more complete person by exposing him to the Etiquettes of Driving long distance trucks on Nigerian roads and the Implications of it. We are also interested in bringing Attitude Requirements and Orientations to Driving long distances on Nigerian roads.

METHODS.

These issues will be discussed with participants in an interactive method under the guidance of a moderator and resource person for each theme. Sufficient time will be allowed for questions and clarifications.

Seminarmate believes that self-awareness exposes us to the infinite powers inherent in every individual and our capacity for achievement/success. Personal development therefore prepares us for the challenges ahead while equipping us with necessary life tools for peak performance. Seminarmate is conscious of the fact that learning is a lifelong activity. We believe that empathy remains one of the most effective ways of transforming the individual. The social psychology we bring to NUPENG petroleum tanker driver in his work will be broken under the following themes:

1. Meaning of Etiquette and Etiquette Applications to Driving in NUPENG-PTD.
2. Attitude Change and Orientations to Driving Long Distances in NUPENG-PTD;
Changing Attitudes and Developing Positive Job Attitude.
- 3.a. Succeeding in life, Peak Performance Training, Self Awareness and a social and psychological enrichment of Drivers to withstand stress and tensions as necessary components of life.
- 3.b. Succeeding in life, the Essentials of Personal Wealth Management and Self Wealth Creation in PTD Work.

CONTENT AND STRATEGY.

Our areas of attention shall include;

1. Meaning of Etiquette and Etiquette Applications to Driving in NUPENG-PTD.

Introduction: Etiquette is the customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession, group or people in general.

2. Attitude Change and Orientations to Driving Long Distances in NUPENG - PTD. Changing Attitudes and Developing Positive Job Attitude.

Attitudes are usually viewed as evaluative tendencies positive or negative towards a person, thing, event or process. Attitude is a state of mind. It is the way you look at things mentally. These are unobservable cognitive constructs that are socially learned, socially changed and socially expressed. We carry our attitudes around with us, like a pair of glasses that tints your perception of the world. The great philosophers sometimes talk about how there is no such thing as truth, because we all have a slightly different perception of it, so how can there be an unbiased reality?

3. Succeeding in life; Peak Performance Training, Self Awareness and a social and psychological enrichment of Drivers to withstand stress and tensions as necessary Components of life.

b. Succeeding in life, the Essentials of Personal Wealth Management and Self Wealth Creation in PTD Work.

A social and psychological enrichment of the drivers [PTD] to withstand stress and tensions as necessary components of life are hinged on the following,

- Every human creation is equal before man and before God.
- That every individual in his natural state is endowed with enormous mindfulness and aspirations to higher values in life.

Seminarmate believes that people are only able to perceive a small part of the world using their conscious awareness, and that this view of the world is filtered by experience, beliefs, values, assumptions, and biological sensory systems. People act and feel based on their perception of the world rather than the real world.

If someone excels in some activity, it can be learned how specifically he has done it by observing certain important details of his behavior. Certificate acquired through formal education is not necessarily the major determinant of our success in life.

Each person's map of the world determines his feelings and behavior. Therefore, impoverished - and unrealistic - maps can restrict choices and result in problems. There is also an emphasis on ways to change internal representations or maps of the world in order to increase behavioral flexibility.