

THE SERVICE DIALOGUE

The 2019 Edition

Elections 2019! Have You Been Served? Hello October!

Forget partisanship when deciding for whom to vote and choose the candidate that best reflects the ideals and policies that are important to you. Voters as customers should be looking for credibility and trust. If they can't find it in the business world, they vote with their feet and shop. In October 2019 elsewhere, in the political world of beautiful Botswana we will find out if, Batswana are discerning customers!

Hello October 2019! We are back to the conversation about the electorate as customers! The day is drawing near and just the other weekend during a social gathering I shared my confusion about who to vote for in my area. Yes, I have been having a conversation with friends and with myself about the upcoming election, the candidates, various controversies, etc. I have several pots brewing inside my brain. Deciding for whom to cast your vote on Election Day can be difficult. Forget partisanship when deciding for whom to vote and choose the candidate that best reflects the ideals and policies that are important to you. Voting is an important decision, one that should be made based on your goals and future plans. When incumbent politicians focus on getting re-elected, their constituents often see their true colours emerge - Because voters are creatures of habit, however, we also show our true colours on Election Day: Our innate magnet to the familiar and aversion to change compel most voters to cast their ballot for the incumbent.

In casting our precious votes, once again remember what people have done in demonstrating that what we need are politicians who understand their responsibility both to reflect the popular will and to educate and lead the public - who, in essence, recognize that in a representative democracy, the people elect them to use their judgment and steer by their own convictions. Good politicians see their job as building consensus for pragmatic and effective policies through deliberation and accommodation; they are not simple weathervanes, shifting this way or that way. Politicians use the fear of change to their advantage. In the coming weeks, don't be afraid to ponder, with an open mind, what is in the best interests of all Batswana. Cast your vote not in the course of habit but for the good of all, regardless of your political affiliation. Vote for the person you feel will truly make Botswana a better place to live. Your vote counts only when it's used to elect the best person for the job. Show your true colours this Election Day!

For you the Voter, as the customer, remember "Ignorance and apathy are the greatest enemies of freedom and liberty"

Written by *Mabu Faith Nteta*

In a democracy, we get the politicians we deserve. Here's an easy and inexpensive way to make MPs behave better. Expect it of them. For you the Voter, the customer, remember "Ignorance and apathy are the greatest enemies of freedom and liberty" My young mentees often ask me if there will ever be a Botswana Obama. I guess on reflecting at an adult level, President Barack Obama being seen as a politician who restores faith in politicians, my answer is always that Obama's success wasn't down to one Good Man. It was down to thousands, and then millions of voters getting engaged with the political process: knocking on doors, making phone calls, and making believable propositions. Americans were as cynical as us about their politicians. But rather than being content to moan, they decided to do something about it

Have you been served?

Politicians who serve well are often backed by skills, experiences, intelligence, integrity, with instincts - all combined together to achieve their goals. The best qualities of politicians are honesty, God fearing and loving. A faithful and effective politician are trustworthy and reliable. They must capture the essence of truth, display sincerity, candor and practices what they preach. They make decisions and accepts responsibility for their actions and words. The same is true in their dealings with his people. They make promises and keep those promises. They may be relied upon. Loving people with their heart, might, mind, soul and striving to help them as a true mark of a responsible politician who serves with conviction.

In a democracy, we get the politicians we deserve

As for me and my confusion, maybe it will clear up soon, or when I am at the polls in October. One thing I am certain about though is that a wind of change needs to blow through politics in Botswana. The old ways will not wash. I want a realistic new vision from the candidates in my area; one that goes beyond "vote for me" and translates into practical evidence of change on the ground. My current MP may go or may stay. Does it really matter? What have they done since I voted for them 5 years ago? What does matter is that political party candidates must see me as a customer. They must serve me as a customer should be and recognise times have changed and that a new generation of politicians must emerge to regain my trust.

Many politicians behave as if assume engaging with voters only exists every four years. But all year, every year, before the elections they should be figuring out how to make meaningful connections with individual voters and the electorate in general. Regardless of how we feel about the candidates or their campaigns, we can agree that this election period in Botswana has been like no other we have seen before. It has taught us a lot about our country and how different people are complex creatures and their motivations are as unique as their fingerprints.



Does the relationship between politicians and voters mirror that of an Organisation and its customers - and if they promise something in their manifesto, they should deliver it?



A manifesto is the same thing as a business plan, or at least it should be. An election is the same as an AGM. If pledges aren't met, voters should respond through their vote! Voters as customers should be picky and fickle. They should demand nothing less than outstanding value. They should be well-informed about choices of candidates, be smarter in choice-making, and selective in whom they elect to join in building a better and stronger united Botswana. Voters as customers should not only demonstrate a zero tolerance for corruption and deceit, they should just vote "No" on account of plain old indifferent service.