

Inversk

Special Feature

+ Unleash
Your
Full
Potential



GEORGE WACHIURI

The Building of an Empire

This Nyeri-born entrepreneur has built a multibillion real estate firm and has now set his eyes on the community.

Ksh 350 USD 5

SUCCESS STORY



Behind the success, glamour, victory and triumph, there is a Story. A story about a tough upbringing, hardships, the struggles through school, the ups and down of his youthful start-ups and the ultimate success of George Wachiuri.

Born in the dry parts of Laburra, Kieni Constituency in Nyeri in a family of 9, his growing up was not easy.

George Wachiuri

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Distress

is father who was a primary school teacher passed away while George was still a young boy. The family had to depend on their uneducated mother who was a house wife before the death of the elder Wachiuri.

This death saw the mother wake up to the hard reality of raising her children - She started cultivating & tilling neighbors' land to earn a livelihood for her family.

Early in the morning, George and his siblings would till their land and in the evening go to till other people's land, a measure of fifteen meters by fifteen meters, for a pay of five shillings.

Each day when they would not do so, they would sleep hungry. Having a daily bread for them was a big hustle and a very big miracle at the same time.

“My motivation to study harder came after I saw my elder Brother with a trouser for the first time. This made me realize I had to work very hard to get such.”

Until class eight, George never knew the importance of education, he was always among the worst performers in his class. Nobody had told him that being educated would bring along some rewards until one time when he saw his brother in a black stripped trouser after he passed well in school and got admitted at Kianyaga High School.

This changed George's mind; he realized that if you performed well in school you would own a trouser.

Since his mother couldn't

afford kerosene in their house, George would read during the day. This improved his performance.

George passed his KCPE exams and joined Chinga Boys High School after convincing his mother to sell their only dairy cow so that he may get the required school fees.

In high school, George was in & out of School due to lack of fees. It was during this time that his entrepreneurial spirit was born, nursed and tested. He had to get a way of raising his school fees by venturing into onion-selling business.

The Novice

Onion business didn't work out well for George. His neighborhood was not producing enough of this agricultural product.

For this reason, he would go to *Endarasha*; a very productive area to buy onions and later sell them in *Mweiga* town. This did not make him enough money and George was prompted to start selling potatoes.

From every bag of potatoes that George sold, he could make about fifty shillings.

The money he earned enabled him to hire a pickup that he would use to ferry the potatoes.

This business also enabled George to raise his School fees and help his mother buy some sugar & flour.

After High school, George passed his exams so well that he was enrolled at The University of Nairobi, Kabete Campus to pursue Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) and majored in Marketing.

While in the University, George ventured into many Businesses such as Laundry, Photography, Home library where he would hire out magazines and Newspapers to his fellow students in his small cubicle for some few coins.

As an entrepreneur in the university, George was so outstanding that he was bestowed the Entrepreneur of the Year award at the University of Nairobi in 1997.

One year after being sacked, George got another job and went to Kakuma refugee camp to do food distribution where he worked for four years.

It is during this time when George got married. He was to later get another job at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) where he was mandated to take charge of logistics.

He also had a stint at the UNICEF and later worked for the World Vision Somali up until 2008, when he resigned and decided to venture into fulltime business.

Life is not always easy after school for everyone, after graduation, George tarmacked for a while.

It is after this that George and a few friends decided to make multiple job applications in organizations. Dropping as many job applications as possible.

George remembers making three hundred handwritten applications.

After making these applications, George was lucky to get his first job with Uchumi supermarkets, Industrial area as an accountant until one day when he was caught talking to a colleague in the office. This got him fired.

George Unleashes His Potential

While still in employment, George had already established a company called Asai Safaris whose offices were at Cianda House.

He had five employees. This startup used to pick tourist from the airport to the renowned Maasai Mara. They could also hire vehicles.

The business was doing so well for some time until some of his cars got stolen. The company collapsed.

Later, George borrowed money and bought beautiful vans to continue ferrying his tourists.

Asai safaris was doing well until 2007, when the number of tourists visiting Kenya sharply went down due to the infamous post-election violence.

Eventually all the cars were auctioned

George started Optiven in 1999 with his brother Charles, after graduating in 1997. At that time he did other small businesses like selling ladies beauty products, making hair shampoos and conditioners and selling clothes at Gikomba market.

and he was left broke.

After the death of Asai Safaris, George hired a yard, named it Asai Motors and took cars which he sold for a

commission until his manager started stealing from him.

It became a bit tough such that he could not manage to pay his rent and employees. Finally he advertised the yard in the newspaper and sold it for Ksh. 2M.

At that time Optiven was still running but it majored in selling stationaries.

In 2008 after leaving formal employment,

George decided to establish another company dealing in property as he sought to stabilize. It is at this time that he registered Darlex Investments, an agency which was involved in marketing property owned by various agencies.

George was good in marketing, in his first deal he sold a property worth seventy million. He was to get a ten percent commission amounting to seven million.

The customer paid for the property, but immediately after the payment, the man who had given George the contract switched off his phone and warned George to never call him. The seven million commission was gone.

SUCCESS STORY

The same year he lost the deal, George decided to use his lifetime saving of Ksh, 5 Million to buy land and venture back into real estate.

What he didn't know is that this was the beginning of yet another traumatizing moment. He met a conman who promised to sell him some good genuine land.

After purchasing the said land, George discovered that he had just been conned. The land was not clean. The land seller vanished into thin air. He tried searching their whereabouts but till to date, he's never laid an eye on them.

Depression struck. It took the mercies of God, support from his immediate family and acceptance of the situation for him to get back to his feet.

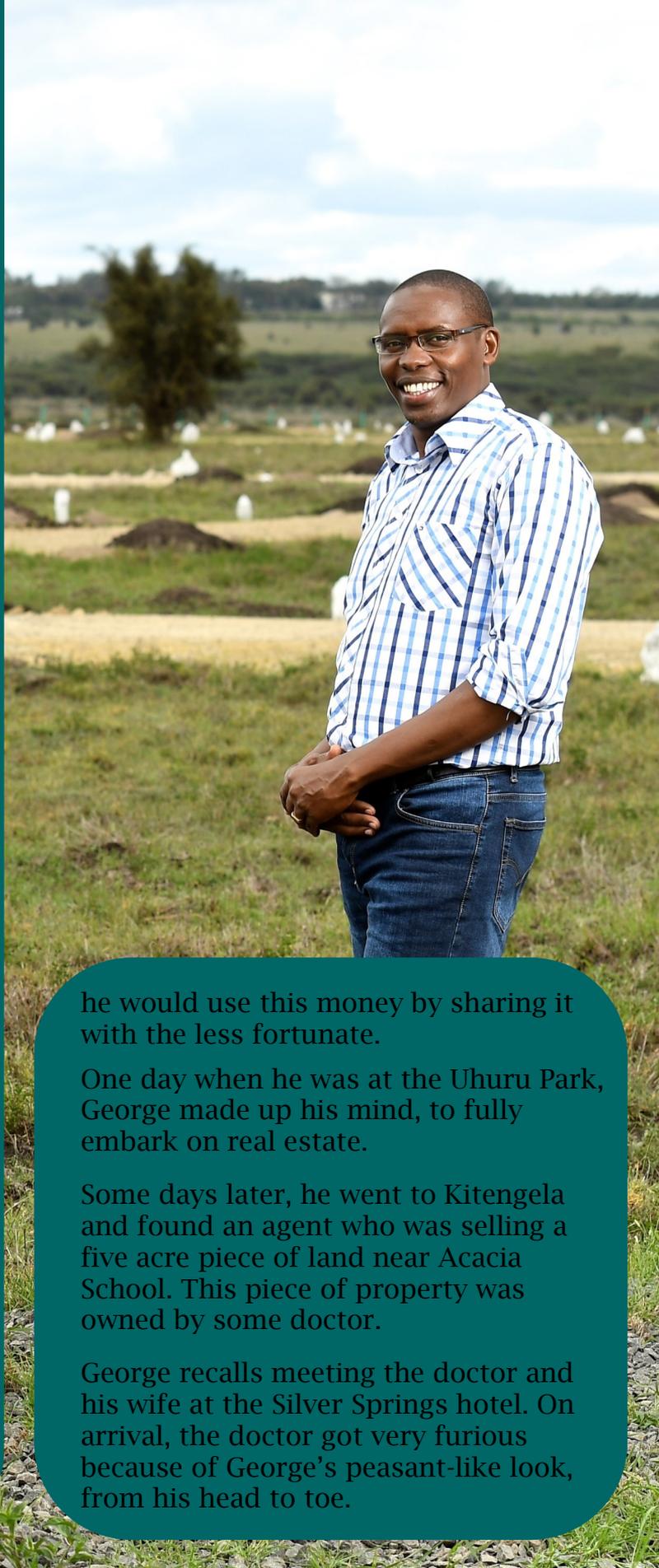
2008 was George's most challenging year. This is now after having lost an accumulated Ksh 12 Million, no saving, no income and no job even after his huge work experience. He made Uhuru Park his office, where he would pitch camp with his bible, pen and paper. He kept telling God to give him money. His promise to God was that if this happened,

he would use this money by sharing it with the less fortunate.

One day when he was at the Uhuru Park, George made up his mind, to fully embark on real estate.

Some days later, he went to Kitengela and found an agent who was selling a five acre piece of land near Acacia School. This piece of property was owned by some doctor.

George recalls meeting the doctor and his wife at the Silver Springs hotel. On arrival, the doctor got very furious because of George's peasant-like look, from his head to toe.



God works in miraculous ways. The same doctor who disparaged George later called him for a good business deal which turned out successful. Business went on well and within three months George had sold thirty five plots.

In 2009, George did another project by the name Silver Gardens. It was forty acres. He got an idea; to talk with the bank and ask them to circulate the property to their staff. They gave him a thumbs-up, asked him to do a presentation on the property which they would circulate to their seven thousand staff. Within three months the forty acres was sold out!

George recalls how at one point he gladly discovered a staggering credit of Kshs. 20 million in his bank account. This came about because the bank agreement was that once customers signed the offer letter, they would pay for their property through the bank.

In 2014, Optiven emerged number One on Kenya's Top 100 mid-sized companies' awards and the best firm in Real Estate. The same year, the company was also awarded as the best in customer service.

The Optiven miracle had just materialized. Since then, it has been a story of success after success with many more awards coming the firm's way.

To Whom Does George Attribute his success?

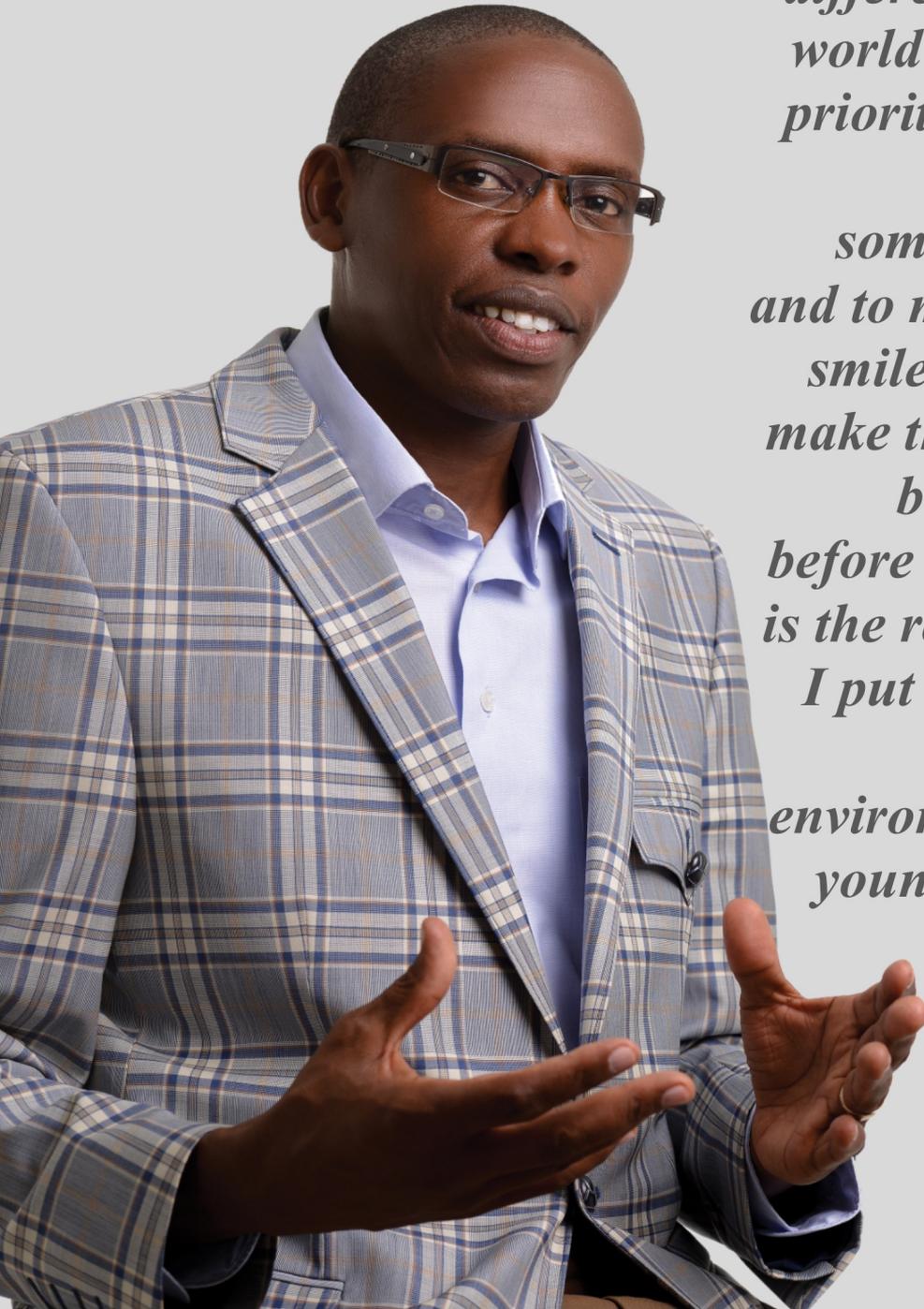
George attributes his success to the faith he has in God. That is why, as he notes, his firm is just but a custodian of the revenues that it generates

Given, this is why Optiven dedicates millions of shillings to their Optiven Foundation because of the many children they are supporting from all over Kenya. All this is in relation to the commitment that he made with God at Uhuru Park.

“The pain of seeing my mother cry every night and day in the messy, torn house we were living in saddened me. It hit me hard that one day, I should build her a decent house.

The dream never came through soonest. But after many years of hard work, patience, persistence and Trusting God, I have established my niche and recorded succeed in the Real Estate Business. And yes, I finally managed to build my mother a decent house.”





“My trust in God to make a difference in the world is my first priority. I aim to transform someone’s life and to make them smile. I want to make the world a better place before I die. This is the reason why I put my money on the environment and young people.”

The Greatest Philanthropist

W

ith Optiven Foundation, George aims to create visible transformation that positively impacts communities, partners, and other stakeholders through sustainable social-economic programs for generations to come.

The foundation benchmarks with Rockefeller Foundation, which was started by John D. Rockefeller who was a deacon who left his resources to keep helping and fighting poverty.

The core pillars for the Foundation are; Provision of quality education opportunities to needy children in Africa, poverty alleviation, promotion of health and environmental protection.

In just a few years, Optiven through its foundation has achieved commendable milestones in their effort to positively impact on the society:-

1

Soaring Eagles Sponsorship Program

Optiven Foundation has a scholarship programme dubbed 'Soaring Eagles Sponsorship Programme', under the foundation's Education Pillar. Through this initiative, over 50 needy and orphaned students from various counties in Kenya has been sponsored to pursue their secondary school education.

The *Soaring Eagles Sponsorship Programme* is geared to offer quality multidisciplinary education to bright and needy Kenyan girls and boys from poor backgrounds as well as bring out the inherent aptitudes from the students through offering empowerment programs that happen every holiday.

Optiven equips them with the necessary life skills so that they can influence the people around them and support their dreams and ambitions. The Foundation's vision is to educate at least 235 students per year drawn from the 47 counties in Kenya, 5 from each of the county.

Apart from offering full scholarship, the foundation has been able to construct a classroom and a science laboratory for the Labura Mixed School, Nyeri in partnership with other stakeholders.

2

Restoring the Dignity of the Forgotten Senior Citizens

The Foundation aims at restoring the dignity of the elderly citizens in the nation through provision of decent housing for their safety and security. The initiative has seen senior citizens in Kitui get a fully equipped house, with a solar lamp, a bed, mattress, blankets and sheets curtains and utensils. This initiative is set to extend to all parts of Kenya.

3



Soweto Anti-Aids Children's Home in Kayole

Optiven is currently working on completing a mercy project at **Soweto Anti-Aids**

Children's Home in Kayole. The Home accommodates over 50 children aged between 1-18 years mostly victims of circumstances: Orphaned children and those affected by many other life tragedies that render them homeless.

4

Promotion of Health

Healthy people are productive people. When you are sick, you cannot do anything and that slows growth. This knowledge has helped Optiven Foundation to organize medical camps and health programs that focus on specific medical issues such as Typhoid, Cholera and Trachoma, in a bid to create awareness and preventive measures on the same.

The main focus is to help people acquire the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to transform their own lives, building a healthier environment as well as the world around them.

George seeks to partner with rehabilitation centers on rehabilitating drug abusers through initiatives such as substance abuse campaigns. He also projects to distribute sanitary pads to girls in school.



5

Environment Protection

Optiven adheres to the ‘Green Environment’ policy where the Group and all its subsidiaries, discourage unnecessary printing of mails and documentation.

In all Optiven’s projects, George rallies for the use of concrete fencing instead of wooden fencing. In all, environmental conscious polices govern Optiven Group and all its subsidiaries.

Optiven is also keen to promote environmental sustainability through initiatives such as: Planting of trees, reduction on tree felling, comprehensive clean-up of counties, advocacy on use of green energy like solar energy and wind energy. The company also promotes provision and proper utilization of clean drinking water.

6

‘Feed One More’ initiative

Optiven Foundation is keen on contributing towards resolving one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - To end hunger and fight food insecurity.

The Foundation carried a successful campaign towards fighting hunger in Kenya. Dubbed; ‘Feed One More’ this campaign saw the Foundation partner with National Drought Management Authority to give relief assistance.

Led by George together with the Board of Trustees, the Foundation was able to feed over 10,000 Kenyans in the hunger stricken areas of Kajiado, Nyeri and Samburu counties. This was aimed to address food insecurity and drought due to the short rains recently experienced in the country in the year 2016/2017.

C

reating One Million Entrepreneurs

George aspires to inspire, mentor, motivate and encourage young people to make better lifelong decisions. Through this, he organizes monthly talks dubbed, 'Good-To-Great' with the main aim of "Creating One Million Entrepreneurs" by the year 2035.

This is in his quest to nurture innovation as well as help create employment for the youth and improve the economy in the country.

George donated his salary to support the youth in starting and building businesses. He called for submissions of business proposals and an intensive selection of the best business proposals submitted was done with the Foundation gearing towards offering a 360-degree support towards the selected winners as vetted by the judges.

The support ranges from purchase of equipment, machinery, financial management, mentorship and an opportunity to work with fund drives, Partnerships, KEPISA, Ministry of Youth (Devolution) amongst others.

Through His Pen

George has authored two books and has offered all the proceeds of these books to go into philanthropy works.

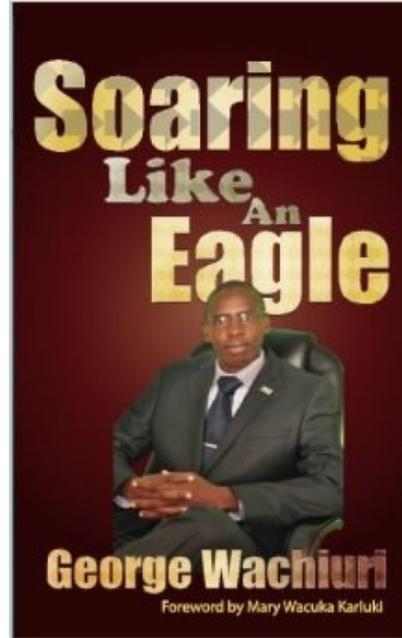
SOARING LIKE AN EAGLE

At one point or another, we have all been exposed to some form of adversity in our lives. Depending on our attitudes and how positive we handle them, these hardships have the capacity to make or break us. This is what life teaches us.

Soaring Like An Eagle is the story of George Wachiuri, aptly narrated in his memoir.

It is the story of a determined young man from some little village called Laburra, who is stopping at nothing to break all the shackles that suppress him. It's about breaking from endless poverty and hopelessness. It's about the epic rise of a young but focused man, from the lowest levels of paucity to the highest levels of academic excellence and top corporate leadership in Kenya.

'Soaring like an Eagle' is about helping people to learn how to make the right decisions even when faced by difficult challenges in life. It is a book that overflows with wisdom for those who dream of attaining great success in life.



What Can We Pick From Soaring Like an Eagle?

1

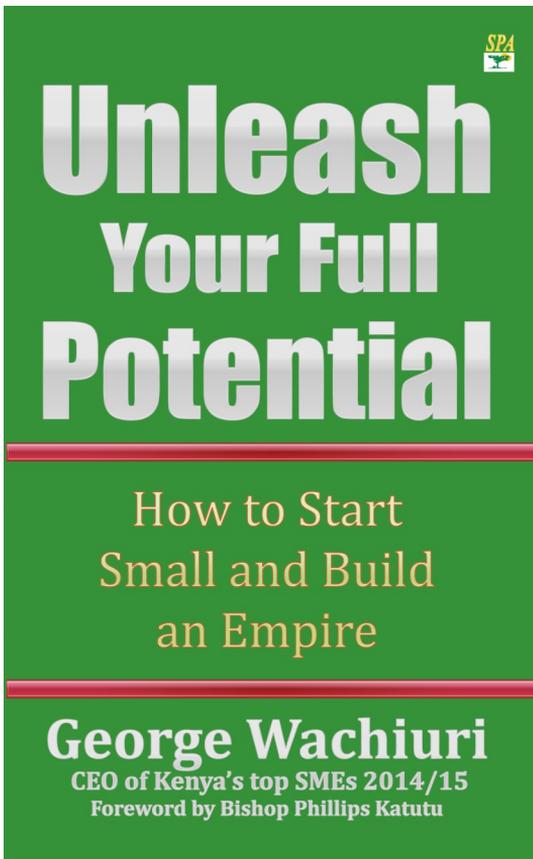
Your success depends on your attitude towards life. Throughout the book, George highlights major areas in his life where positive attitude has helped him achieve success and be who he is.

2

This book will inspire you to become a go-getter who can achieve what you envision. You have an inherent capacity to become a person of great success and positive influence.

3

This book will leave you all fired up and exceptionally encouraged. More importantly, it will lay bare, the hardships that George went through during his formative age.



This book is for those who are struggling to know how prepared they are to start a business or grow their existing businesses.

George offers critical nuggets to anyone who wishes to grow their business into a successful empire. He shares the exact steps he took in building Optiven to what it is. He discusses the effects of social media, power of teamwork, place of vision, time management, marketing and innovation in building a business.

Reading 'Unleash Your Full Potential' will help you to know what you must consider in starting, running and expanding your business. By the end of the read, your passions to realize your full potentials will all be sweltering.

This book is for anyone who dreams of building a business empire and create jobs in a country where unemployment is a norm.

If you are stack and do not know what to do with that idea that you are obsessed with, if you are anxious about what your business will resort into, if you do not have the information to start a business, Unleash Your Potential will be your trusted reference point.

Why unleash Your Full Potential?

1

If you are yet to start your business, this book will guide you to start your business the right away. It will help you in getting ready to begin your StartUp

2

The book is thought provoking. It will charge you to evaluate your entrepreneurial skills.

3

The ins and outs of building your own venture: George takes an in-depth analysis of every aspect of an organization - From idea development, selecting a winning team, organizational structure, building the product, marketing strategy and implementation.

Hacks to Success

You have to work really hard. Hard work is important.

Do not compare yourself with others. Every person have their path and their own timing.

Patient pays. Sometimes we do not have it because we are wondering if God is even there. Wait until God says that it is time for you to get what He wants you to have.

● Have peace with your family. If you have no peace in your house, you cannot deliver out there. Peace has to start from your house.

● Put God at the center of all you do.

● Teamwork is indispensable. You cannot do it alone. Seek help and value the people you are working with, whether they are suppliers or employees. Value them and respect them.

Lack of mentorship is a disaster, you need to have a mentor who will guide and walk with you. If I had a mentor when I started, right now Optiven could be 50 times bigger.

Do one thing and do it well. It is good to go step by step and then put it down so that you can gauge yourself.

Be innovative and authentic because people trust those who are honest.



**The Ultimate
Resource
For Entrepreneurs**

**Publisher and Editor-In-Chief
Kimani Patrick**

**Executive Assistant
Brenda Ndwiga**

**Director of Photography
David Macharia
(Versatile Photographers)**

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**Maureen Kahihu
Rosemary Wanjiru
Muchiri Muchoki
Phoebe Atieno
Joyce Njambi**

**Inversk Magazine
www.inversk.co.ke**

**Feedback and Ideas
ideas@inversk.co.ke**