Thriving Through the Storm

Annotated summary | ZASS Foundation Mentorship Series | 22 November 2026

Main takeaway
Career resilience comes from sustained effort, trusted relationships, distinctive value, adaptability, and learning to use emerging tools with good judgement.

Opening perspective

The coordinator welcomed the Visionaries and framed the discussion for people entering, reshaping, or reflecting on their careers. The opening remarks stressed that change can arrive unexpectedly, and encouraged resilience, purposeful preparation, learning across generations, and active participation. Technology was recognised as a force connecting people across countries.

Eng. Rebecca Abonyo Masaba: career lessons

- **Careers can evolve.** Eng. Rebecca began civil engineering in 2008 without a fixed plan, spent two years designing water projects, then moved into transport and later infrastructure finance, public-private partnerships, and toll consultancy.
- **Build experience and range.** Put in sustained work and seek varied exposure, including public and private sector experience. Look for challenging work others avoid; it can build rare, valuable expertise.
- **Be valuable and reliable.** “Indispensable” does not mean irreplaceable. Add value, earn trust through accurate work, collaborate well, and leave people confident they can rely on you.
- **Prepare for disruption.** She identified organisational restructuring as an immediate job-security risk. AI can replace some tasks and improve productivity; stay informed about its impact in your field and use it with human expertise and judgement.
- **Choose growth deliberately.** Career growth is not constant, and comfort can be a sound choice when it supports other priorities. Stay curious, speak up, do good work even when unseen, build relationships, and be open to work beyond your job description.
- **One non-negotiable:** timekeeping. Punctuality signals professionalism and reliability.

Audience contributions

Kevin raised degree versus skills: Eng. Rebecca said a degree often opens the door, while exceptional, scarce skills can be decisive in specialist fields. **Ben** chose potential over experience in recruitment; she said the choice depends on the role, and years on a CV do not by themselves prove capability. **Trevor** argued for career security over job security, emphasising continued skills development and preparation for future roles; Eng. Rebecca agreed. **Sam Sakwa** added that acquiring skills, anticipating disruption, and championing change build resilience and relevance.

Acknowledgements

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With appreciation,
Uncle Patrick