

**Episode 20: Lydiah Sibanda – Norwich Insurance Brokers Ltd., Zambia**



Lydiah calls herself a “premature entrepreneur.” Norwich Insurance Brokers emerged from the ashes of the collapsed Meridian Holding Group where she was CEO of Meridian Insurance Brokers. Lydiah and her Finance Director partnered to purchase Meridian Insurance Brokers from the liquidators. They renamed and successfully rebranded the company. Today, 23 years later, Norwich is one of the leading locally-owned insurance brokerages in Zambia with branches in Livingston, Lusaka and Ndola. Norwich employs 18 people, some of whom have been with Lydiah since her Meridian days.

**What you’ll hear in this episode:**

- About insurance brokerage services and how brokers maintain their independence.
- The products Norwich offers: life and non-life insurance products, from cradle to grave and everything in between.
- Reasons why insurance penetration in Zambia is low in spite of the affordable cost.
- How Lydiah picked up the pieces after the Meridian Holding Company collapsed.
- Buying Meridian Insurance Brokers from the liquidators, renaming and rebranding.
- The inspiration behind the name Norwich: a city in the United Kingdom that was rebuilt from ashes.
- Norwich’s position among the leading locally owned insurance brokerages in Zambia.
- **Challenges:** creating a new company and burying the old brand identity. Meeting expenses while company funds were tied up in the liquidated Meridian Bank.
- **Faith’s dream:** Norwich will be the lead insurance brokerage in Zambia. Offer services throughout Africa, from Cape to Cairo.
- **Lesson Learned:** Your reputation matters.
- **Words of Inspiration:** Arise, swim above the challenges. Smile. Find a mentor. Be prepared.

**Useful Resources**

Common Market for Eastern & Southern Africa:  
<http://www.comesa.int/>  
Southern Africa Development Community: <https://www.sadc.int/>  
Zambia Association of Chambers of Commerce & Industry:  
<https://bit.ly/2lrNFAF>

**Norwich Insurance Brokers Ltd.**

Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/NorwichInsuranceZambia/>

**We would love to hear from you**

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