

# **Bel Papyrus Share with CU Students, Lessons Learned Through Experience**

“Don’t play with quality, let quality be your identifying factor,” remarked the guest speaker from Bel Papyrus, Product Manager, Dr Nwangwa Chukwuemeka, at the Chemistry Department’s Town & Gown Seminar held on Tuesday, October 27, 2015. Dr Chukwuemeka shared his wealth of experience with both undergraduate and postgraduate Chemistry students in his address titled, “Recycling of Wastepaper to Tissue Jumbo Reels,” informing them of the intricate process involved in converting paper waste into re-useable products.

The Head of the Chemistry Department, Professor Ajanaku Kolawole, in his opening remarks stated that the Town & Gown events are part of the University’s strategy in seeking to create job-ready graduates. He expressed the importance of students being able to see what is obtainable in their industry. “This prompts, pushes and inspires students to be ready for the industry and to establish their specific areas of interest,” he remarked. He also expressed his desire to see Covenant University Chemistry students translate what they learn within the walls of the University, into marketable products.

In his presentation, Dr Chukwuemeka informed the gathering that 35% of refuse placed in dust bins is in fact wastepaper, and what many people fail to recognise is that when they throw away paper, they are inherently throwing away money. He shared how 1 tonne of waste paper creates approximately N30 000 worth of products. Each day, Bel Papyrus produces 120 tonnes of product, making it a unique operation on one hand, as they are offering the best solution for waste paper. While on the other hand, they are reducing pollution and minimising environmental impact.

“Recycling helps extend the life and usefulness of something that has served its initial purpose, by producing something that’s re-useable and Bel Papyrus seeks to create tissue, serviettes and kitchen towels from waste paper,” he remarked; hence their slogan, “Waste to Wealth.”

He explained the different grades of waste paper and their production purpose. He also detailed the process of turning the different types of waste paper into tissue products, emphasising the importance of using quality, state-of-the-art machinery in order to perform a superior job.

In his advice to students, Dr Chukwuemeka remarked, “You need to be one step ahead of competitors. You have to be cost conscious, but don’t play with quality, let quality be your defining factor.” He warned about the effects of imitation products stating, “Imitation kills an industry. If your product is good and is selling, people will want to imitate it. However, you must think of how to protect your product.” He shared that Bel Papyrus had uniquely branded their tissue as a measure of protecting it from imitation.

Professor Ajanaku reminded the gathering of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) that was signed in August, 2015 between the Chemistry and Civil Engineering Departments of the

University and Bel Papyrus. He remarked that it is a collaboration of interchange for excursions, industry training and research. Dr Chukuemeka, in support, encouraged students who have research ideas to come on board as there are still areas in which Bel Papyrus requires solutions.

Also in attendance were members of the Chemistry Department and a member from the Directorate of Media and Corporate Affairs.

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