

## **Secretaries Training: Illuminating the Manager behind the Boss.**

In a line with the University of Nairobi Corporate Strategy, the University management found it necessary to impart the much needed skills into one of their very important cadre of staff: The secretaries. The theme for the training was: Illuminating the real manager behind the boss.

Launching the 3 days training at the Central Catering Unit, CCU, on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration and Finance, Prof. Peter Mbithi said that the training was timely as the university repositions itself to remain the leader of excellence. Prof. Mbithi urged the Secretaries to be creative, to work with passion and serve the university with humility and distinction.

“The role of the modern secretary has changed following the office automation. The modern secretary is required to have more skills so as to carry out their functions with ease. They are required to develop a positive attitude. As the core person, a secretary is required to train new staff, their new bosses’ included,” he said.

Among the various functions that the secretary is expected to perform are: coordinating office activities, managing office clients and in this case students, handling critical duties in the organization and maintaining proper filing system, managing information and indexing of files.

Prof. Mbithi noted that the University is committed to sustaining its position of providing leadership in world class excellence. He urged the secretaries to feel free to engage in the discussions as it will assist to mould them in their shortcomings.

Even as the world is getting technologically savvy and virtually everything is being automated, Prof. Mbithi pointed out that secretarial duties cannot be automated. Case in point, when hell breaks loose, as a secretary, one is expected to maintain her calmness. That calmness cannot be automated. Among other qualities that cannot be automated are the communication skills, the corporate philosophy among others.

To be highly effective in performing their duties, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration and Finance who has since been appointed the Vice-Chancellor, advised the secretaries to work with pleasure. He said that pleasure in the job, puts perfection in the job. “Always aspire to enjoy your work to the fullest”, he said.

Prof. Mbithi also conveyed the message from the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. George Magoha, who noted that despite the technological advancement, the role of the secretary cannot be automated. Their duty involves personal touch and interpersonal skills.

The managers behind the boss were taught several things in the seminar, key among them ; time management, communication skills, office money management, career development, stress management and dealing with difficult people, office etiquette and personal grooming.

The 3 day seminars is very important to the university and it is indeed included in the 2014/2015 University of Nairobi Performance Contract. The University top managers came for the function

including Prof. Benard Aduda, Principal, College of Biological and Physical Sciences, Prof. Isaac Kibwage, Principal, College of Health Sciences, Prof. Peter K'Kobonyo, Deputy Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Registrar Administration, Dr. Dismas Bulinda.