

GROWTH THROUGH CHANGE

HIS CAREER CHANGED; HIS PASSION DIDN'T

For Aki Debayo, Sprint was an unplanned, unexpected detour. He had just taken his admission test for medical school and had 15 colleges lined up for interviews. He was in a summer graduate residency program at Columbia University when long distance came calling.

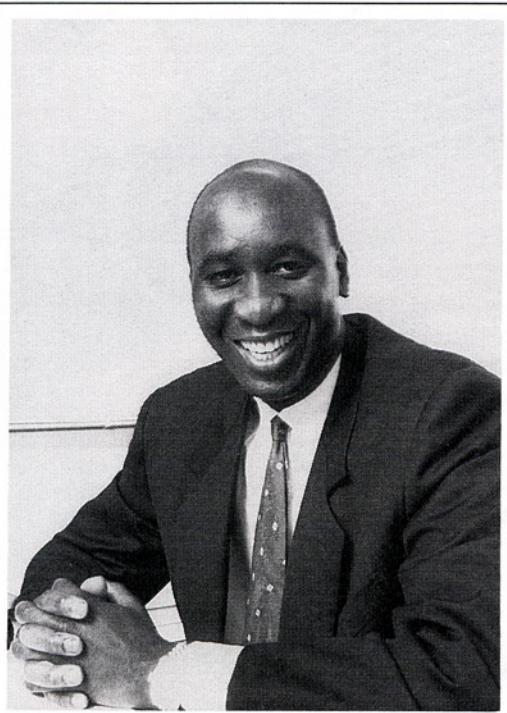
"A temporary agency hired me to telemarket businesses," Debayo recalls. "I tried it . . . and fell in love with the whole vision of Sprint. Here I am, five years later, still turned on by what this company can do for the world."

The only difference is, Debayo isn't calling customers cold over the telephone all day. He's motivating 100 other employees to do what he did. As regional sales director for Sprint's New Jersey/Keystone Region, Debayo is plowing new sales ground in Pennsylvania and Delaware to complement the new business he's setting up in New Jersey.

"That's a lot of change — and a lot of growth — in a short period of time," says the 30-year-old Debayo. "To go from a temporary telemarketer to a regional sales director, you have to be passionate about what you're doing, and I am. If I didn't think we had the technology to build a global, digital highway, I would have gone to medical school. This is just a different way to enhance people's lives."

Debayo's definition of quality work is "something that endures."

"That's what we're doing with Sprint — redefining the way people do business," Debayo says. "Look who's leading the world in videoconferencing. Look at our medical imaging technology . . . our frame relay capabilities . . . our leadership position in voice



Toby Seger

"Our marketing imagination . . . is making businesses more efficient and more profitable."

— Aki Debayo
Regional Sales Director
New Jersey/Keystone Region
Lyndhurst, N.J.

recognition. We take a backseat to no one technologically. Our marketing imagination is changing the way things get done. We're making businesses more efficient, more profitable. Some people say telecommunications isn't exciting. I disagree. We're creating products and services that are driving us to new possibilities, helping us to grow as a company and helping others to respond to all kinds of changes."

Debayo still feels the excitement he felt as a telemarketer. "I remember how excited I was listening to the quality of my first call to California," he recalls. "I knew then that we were setting new standards of quality transmission. Our network gives us so many advantages to build and dominate new markets. We have customer-focused people who are dedicated to the most intelligent, innovative solutions in the business."

If Debayo sounds enthusiastic, it's because he genuinely enjoys serving the customer's needs. "Growing up in Nigeria, I was taught to respect everyone," he says. "That's why I en-

joyed telemarketing. I have so much respect for the customer. To be successful, you have to humble yourself. As a telemarketer, I would cold-call so much every day, I would lose my voice. I couldn't wait to hit the phones. I couldn't wait to help companies find better ways to meet their own corporate objectives.

"The victory isn't just the paycheck," Debayo insists. "The victory is having completely satisfied customers. To me, success is not the contract you're signing today. It's the additional orders you place a year from now. That's enduring. That's quality." ■