

**LONDON CALLING**

# The Life of a London Slasher

"I don't understand what you do", boomed a relatively good acquaintance at a party a few months ago.

The speaker? One of the brightest people I know and a KC (formerly QC), no less.

So, what career could I possibly have that could flummox a learned senior officer of our Majesty's law courts?

- Beverage Dissemination Officer? \*1
- Digital Overlord? \*2
- Retail Jedi? \*3
- Chief Chatter? \*4

Dear Readers, I am (alas) none of these things – as enticing as they may seem.

In colloquial employment terms, I am what is increasingly known as a "Slasher". By which I mean: I have a portfolio career.

Formerly a corporate lawyer in the City of London, I now work as:

- Actor;
- Writer (screen-writing and journalism);
- Strategy Consultant;

- Corporate Trainer; and
- Life & Executive Coach.

And, yes (since you didn't ask): they are as fun and as challenging as they sound!

So, what are the bright spots and what parts are less enjoyable?

1. Well, firstly – there is no typical day or week. Just as an example: last Friday, my agent called and told me I had an audition/self-tape. He sent through the "Sides" (the scenes designated for me to prepare). On Saturday, I learned my lines and on Sunday (together with a friend), I filmed the scenes. Later that day, I sent the filmed scenes back to my agent.
2. On Monday, it was back to my legal consultancy role (known as Document Review). As companies and law firms seek cost efficiencies in their businesses, they look for ways to cut their legal and administrative costs. So, they hire technology outsourcers

and practitioners with legal skills to lower their firms' expenses.

So, rather than getting a junior trainee or associate in a law firm to handle relatively basic and mundane review of documents and/or due diligence, they hire former lawyers (like me) to do this work at much reduced rates with the projects utilizing state-of-the-art technological software.

3. On Tuesday, the founders of an African tech venture capital firm that I consult with, Launch Africa Ventures (LAV) informed me they were coming to London in the coming weeks as part of their investment Roadshow for their second fund (\$250m Seed/Series A & B). The first fund of LAV raised \$36.3m for the benefit of tech start-ups in 21 countries across Africa (Fintech, PropTech, EduTech, Data & Logistics, E-Commerce/

**London people**

One of the most interesting things about London is the huge diversity of people who call it home. Astonishingly, the population of the UK capital is now just under nine million, making it significantly higher than New York and not far behind the entire population of Portugal! The culture, atmosphere and tolerance in London are fertile ground for cultivating the variety of fascinating people who have an amazing tale to tell of their life journeys.

London Calling is hoping to bring you thoughtful insights into the lives of some of

these characters, wherever possible in their own words, as a regular feature. To kick off this new idea, we are honoured to hear from actor, producer, consultant, coach and all-round amazing man **LEKE ADEBAYO**. Your columnist had the honour of sitting next to Leke at a lunch hosted by Downton Abbey author, Lord Julian Fellowes.

As Leke and I listened to the great man tell his tales of writing and inspiration for his work, the idea of this new direction for the column from time-to-time came to me.

**RICHARD LAMBERTH**

Marketplace, etc), so as to address some of the major (soft) infrastructural challenges and bottlenecks on the continent.

So, my job will be to (partly) prepare the ground for their visit and introduce them to prospective investors who might not already be on their radar.

4. On Wednesday afternoon, I attended a Speaking and Networking Event where the guest speaker was (and is) a renowned figure in the entertainment industry, whose films and shows are watched (with non-guilty pleasure) across the entire globe.

A really fascinating talk with multiple insights and titbits for all concerned

but especially for me as an actor and writer. Business cards were exchanged and lifelong friendships will be formed (I'm sure).

*(A small prize to anyone who guesses correctly (first time) who the Guest Speaker is!)*

5. On Thursday evening, I attended an Africa Leadership Conference, the premise of which was a Call-to-Action to incubate and accelerate the leadership abilities of Africa's leaders of tomorrow. Africa has over 1.2 billion people with a median age of 20. If harnessed and nurtured effectively and responsibly, that could create a gigantic workforce for economic production and sustainable

consumerism for the internal market. And, with the new African Free Trade Agreement starting to take effect, laws are now in place to regulate the informal trading across borders that is already happening on the ground.

At the event, I was approached by an attendee who overheard me chatting with the host, to potentially coach some of the mentees that will form part of his new coaching company.

So, that was a very inspiring way to spend an evening and to catch up with old chums and make new contacts.

6. And, on Friday, in between watching and listening to reports of the latest meltdown of the British government, I managed to write this article!

In what ways can having a portfolio career be more challenging than a regular job?

- **There is no such thing as 9 to 5.** If you have to work at 11pm at night, you work at 11pm at night.
- **Similarly, there is no demarcation between week-day and week-end.** That can be very hard for friends and family to understand which can really test one's communications skills!
- **Schedules can be very hard to plan.** Because of the eclectic nature of the various functions in my portfolio, turbulence is a way of life!

[www.lekeadebayo.com](http://www.lekeadebayo.com)

- \*1 = Bartender
- \*2 = Website Manager
- \*3 = Shop Assistant
- \*4 = Call Centre Manager

Richard Lamberth leads parallel lives with homes and business interests in London and Portugal. He provides consultancy services to leading businesses in insurance and financial services, property and media sectors. He has four sons, two dogs and enjoys a busy family life. He likes swimming, keeping fit and an outdoor life. [LondonCalling@portugalresident.com](http://LondonCalling@portugalresident.com)

