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DETAVIO SAMUELS IS LEADING MARKETING TO ANOTHER LEVEL

WORDS: DEBORAH WALKER
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In today's marketing industry, the words "marketing" and "change" have become almost synonymous. Gone are the days when marketing consisted of word-of-mouth and simple billboard campaigns. Instead, today's marketing leaders are using countless creative tactics to reach targeted audiences. At the nation's leading full-service multicultural marketing firm, GlobalHue, Group Account Vice President Detavio Samuels is no exception. Using his creative juices, Samuels is quickly securing his place as an idea strategist and self-proclaimed change agent. "I realized that what I do is much bigger than marketing," he says of his "change agent" philosophy. "It's about creating change — whether it's for organizations, brands, or people."

Creating transformation has always been a passion for Samuels, a Denver, CO.-native. "Both of my parents are educators, so I grew up with people who impacted and touched individuals' lives," he says.

Samuels maintained his enthusiasm for marketing throughout his undergraduate studies at Duke University and later in his graduate studies at Stanford. "I immediately fell in love with it," he recalls. "I learned critical analysis, how to influence people and get things done." After graduating he worked with Johnson & Johnson and later consulted with the company's global marketing team. Traveling to places like Belgium, Spain, Columbia, and Brazil, Samuels says, "It was an incredible opportunity."

Hard work and determination continued to open doors for Samuels, eventually leading to his role with GlobalHue. Seeing the diversity and wealth of opportunities available at the company confirmed it was the right fit. "On one side of the office they're speaking Spanish, walking through the halls you see posters in Korean and Japanese and on another account they're mostly African American," he says. It was an opportunity he couldn't pass up.

Today, Samuels manages a team of 15, where they work to develop successful marketing solutions to help clients such as Walmart



and the U.S. Navy meet their African American marketing objectives. He humbly credits much of the team's success to his "servant leadership" management approach. "It's not about you, it's what happens through you," he says.

"A lot of leaders are so focused on themselves — their promotion, their assignment. If I pour into my people, the entire ship rises."

Samuel's ship is certainly sailing high these days, and when it comes to success, he offers simple but pertinent advice on finding and maintaining your passion.

DO WHAT YOU LOVE "Figure out what you hate doing and stop doing it as soon as possible. Figure out what you love doing and do that as much as possible."

STAY HUNGRY "The key is to redefine success. Allow it to be a moving target. Set goals, have a vision, and if you get there, set a new vision."

STAY HUMBLE "The more you learn, the more you realize you don't know. When you think you know everything, it can become a roadblock to success."

Samuels has no trouble taking his own advice to heart. In just a short time, he has strategically made a name for himself in the digital space, being named one of the top 30 under 30 tweeters and recognized for being selected as having one of the top 100 best blogs (detavio.com) for MBA students. "I think there are very few companies that can afford to not be in a digital space right now," he says. "Social media is allowing us to break down a lot of the barriers that were there before. [Companies] should participate, take risks and treat digital for what it is, another medium for ideas to spread.

Samuels also cautions digital space users to maintain their authenticity. "In the digital space, it's easy to figure out the truth and it spreads quickly," he warns. "And just like in real life, much of what we do in a digital space is around trust."

For Samuels, real life includes redefining success at various points in his life. Next on his agenda is a new book, Choose The Extraordinary, which he hopes to release early 2010. Samuels describes his project as a decision filter that encourages people to go above and beyond the status quo.

Additionally, Samuels affirms that much of his time will be poured back into GlobalHue. "We are moving into new territories and there will be great opportunities to help GlobalHue become an even more extraordinary agency."

When it comes to being extraordinary Samuels references a favorite quote, "A machine can do the work of 50 men, but no machine can do the work of one extraordinary man." From the looks of it, Samuels is working overtime to become just that. nv



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