

BY MY SIDE: THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF GREATER LONDON

As you know, I've been blessed to work with some of the world's greatest business folk such as Michael Gerber and Dr Stephen Covey.

Added to that list is my Alitam Chairman, Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE, Lord-Lieutenant in the capital and a highly recognised businessman and philanthropist.

'Sir Ken' is a shining light of business brilliance and philanthropy in the UK – for which he earned a knighthood in 2018. He's a man of such stature within the establishment that he is trusted by the Queen and royal family to attend to their official engagements in London. And, as Chairman, he is firmly by my side to help steer the pioneering Alitam pharmacy group into game-changing waters as the 'Pharmacy of the Future'.

Sir Ken is a potent combination of inspiration, hard-won wisdom and a sixth sense when it comes to business. He knows a fantastic idea when he sees one. And I know a truly talented business person when I meet one. I jumped at the chance of working with Sir Ken. He possesses outstanding business acumen, he's built a stellar business career; one which saw him crowned Number 1 in the Powerlist's 2016 roster of the UK's most influential black people having listed his first start-up on AIM in 2000.

As Director of Reuters he was the first British-born black man to serve as a Director of a FTSE100 company.

Sir Ken is a firm advocate of social inclusion, and keenly supports a wide array of charities and initiatives. His philanthropic activities are legion: Sir Ken and Lady Olisa gave £2m to his alma mater to create the Olisa Library at Fitzwilliam College and welfare to work charity, Shaw Trust, has doubled in size during his Chairmanship with revenues of nearly £250 million helping around 500,000 people a year.

Sir Ken is also President of Thames Reach, a charity working to shelter and resettle the homeless and founding Chair of the Aleto Foundation, which supports future leaders from tough reality backgrounds.

Sir Ken is an outstanding individual who understands how to dream, and how to visualise a business idea and help make it happen. I regularly observe his phenomenal work with Alitam. He's well-practiced in boardroom dynamics and is excellent at managing conflict, keeping everyone positive and motivating them to find the best in themselves.



Crucially, he has a clear focus on corporate compliance and building a business with firm foundations. At our recent workshop he outlined beautifully the 'industrial logic' behind the idea of Alitam; demonstrating an unwavering faith in the idea of a pharmacy group which will disrupt a complacent, tired sector overnight.

He galvanised the members gathered before him, and solidly set out a plan of action.

Sir Ken and I work together perfectly as we are both visionaries with complementary styles. I envision a paradigm-busting business, and a way of bringing it about; he sees clearly the plan required for each step, and he keeps everyone aligned in the most encouraging and approachable manner.

It's a privilege to learn from his life experiences and business lessons; and an honour to be working around his timetable of royal engagements (never before has someone left one of my meetings saying they are 'needed by the Queen').

With Sir Ken joining me at the helm, all of our UK and Ireland Alitam members can have absolute faith in achieving the 'Pharmacy of the Future' vision. And I couldn't be more proud to have attracted the conviction, trust and know-how of such a great man.

Sir Ken is a legend.



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