

UNVEILING RUFAI OSENI OF ARISE TV MORNING SHOW

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Rufai Oseni, who is he?

This post is not about his age, place of birth or ethnic group, academic qualifications, marital status or net worth. It is about his emerging brand in the media, and particularly in the television space. Rufai Oseni, one of the anchors of MORNING SHOW on ARISE TV is an adversarial journalist. He is in a class of his own and doing very well at it. For those who may care to know, adversarial journalism "refers to a kind of journalism or a journalistic role where the journalist adopts an oppositional and combative style of reporting and interviewing. The goal of adversarial journalism is to reveal supposed wrongdoings of actors under investigation." By dint of hard work and consistent consistency, Rufai is fast becoming a household name in Nigeria, media wise. When in his elements, he is brutally frank and does not need to be compared with anyone else. He is carving a niche for himself. Everyone got his or her own style.

Many in the conservative school would lampoon and pillory Rufai as combative and controversial but that is good for advocacy journalism. Before Rufai is either unjustly vilified or misunderstood, let's not forget that adversarial journalism is said to refer to "a form of reporting in which the media adopt a skeptical or even hostile posture toward the government and public officials."

Journalism is dynamic just like life is too. Many roads lead to the bush. Journalism is a wide canvass. Combative journalism is one of the many ways to investigate, inform, enlighten and entertain. Rufai does not have to use anyone else's manual if he is within the law and armed with facts—the twin impeccable golden rules of journalism.

Whether Rufai is not classified as a journalist and summarily dismissed as an entertainer or bitter interrogator by his critics, the fear of Rufai on set by any guest is the beginning of wisdom. He is vigorous and passionate about what he does without caring to be politically correct. Alas, Rufai is bringing something new

to the media table as an adversarial journalist. He would not let unprepared guests run away with preconceived mouthwatering lies, fibs or deliberate deceptions and concoctions.

Rufai would not allow hired publicists to come as guests on TV to deceive the listening or viewing public. His line of rejoinder before throwing punchy questions would always make any ill-prepared guest to stutter in fright. Rufai

would not be intimidated either. He is respectful but can receive as much as he can give. He is very much aware that adversarial journalism is "investigative journalism done in an antagonistic way". In doing his work, Rufai can antagonize but within lawful and respectful boundaries.

Some guests do not realize that a journalist, an anchor or presenter is not bereft of rights. Media men and women deserve to be respected. That an anchor or interviewer is asking questions from guests does not mean that he or she is unknowing or civilly dead.

At all material times, a guest or interviewee should be accorded the highest form of respect and dignity by the anchor person. However, a condescending, indecorous cantankerous, halting, untruthful, prevaricating guest must never be treated with an undeserving candour or respect by the anchor or presenter.

Respect begets respect. Period! In adversarial journalism, Rufai is it. You may not like him but his incisive questioning style on TV has won him many fans, admirers and followers who now see him as the People's Advocate on Television. Rufai Oseni is work in progress. He is yet to be revealed. A new normal is possible!

