



ChimDingo Publishing - Life Story

“Iraqi Staff Farewell March 25 2008”

Author's Note: Farewell message to all staff at Iraqna (now Zain) but mainly the local staff and people who risked so much, made me feel welcome, appreciated that I was contributing to changing their lives for the better and often made small but meaningful gestures of kindness.

Farewell - Best of Luck

My Colleagues and Friends,

After two and a half years here in Iraq it's shortly time to say farewell and move onto another challenge and chapter in my life.

I would like to thank Orascom Telecom for the opportunity that I was given to work in Iraq with Iraqna and Zain for some extended time. It certainly has been a challenge and I believe I contributed to the development of the staff and company here over that time.

Some of us may have disagreed at various times and culturally it's been a bit different for both sides, but I have respect for everyone who has had the guts to travel here to work or come to work despite the adversity. I have learnt a lot and in retrospect there are a few things I would have done differently, but you live and learn.

I think stress affects us all here more than we realise and unless you're here day to day it's hard to describe that to people. This has been a much harder assignment than I thought it would be, I also chose not to take too many rotations in case it didn't last and that has made me somewhat burnt out but it was the right decision for my life plan and I believe my staff appreciated the support.

For many of you it may have been your first experience of meeting or dealing with an Australian. I know the accent can be difficult. Some of you may have found me direct and challenging but that's our way in business. I hope that I showed an alternative way to do things and that you picked up a few tips along the way. I arrived at 87kgs and I'm leaving at 102kgs so I've picked up a bit!

One day hopefully I'll be able to return and visit the real Iraq when some form of normality returns and vice versa hope that some of you may be able to experience our part of the world Down Under or other areas of the world far removed from here.

I'm not sure exactly where I'm headed yet and there may be a few detours but eventually I'll end up working in Latin America (visiting Australia occasionally) and one day pursue my dreams to set-up my own businesses and an orphanage there after finishing in the corporate world.

Remember a thought for our friends, colleagues and family members who didn't make it through these turbulent times.

I wish you all the best of luck for the future, especially in these uncertain times, most of you are still fairly young so there is a lot of water to pass under the bridge yet so be patient, learn as much as you can and pursue your dreams. Work hard and make things happen, don't wait for them to happen; it'll pay off one day.

I didn't start properly in the corporate world till I was 28. I dragged myself up from poverty and made something out of myself and the best is yet to come.

My advice for a lifetime is:-

“Never Ever Compromise Your Integrity” ^[1]

“Never Be Afraid to Stand Up or Speak Up for What You Believe In or What is Right”

“Think How You’d Like to be Treated if the Shoe Was on the Other Foot”

“How You Live Your Life or What You Achieve is Your Personal Responsibility” ^[2]

“Respect and Trust Must Be Earned”

“Make a Difference in Life and Help Someone Less Fortunate”

“Don’t Judge a Book by its Cover”

I will miss my many friends and “family” here but will never forget you. I will especially miss my wonderful cheerful team who have done a lot of behind the scenes work often without recognition. You will always be welcome in my home anywhere in the world.

Despite everything it has been an experience of several lifetimes and I have enjoyed it.

Stay safe,

Sincerely, your Aussie mate...hasta manana

Brian ☺

"Twenty Years From Now You Will Be More Disappointed By The Things You Didn't Do Than By The Ones You Did. So Throw Off The Bowlines, Sail Away From The Safe Harbour, Catch The Trade Winds In Your Sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Attributed to Mark Twain.

^[1] I made that mistake once when I was 19 and learnt a hard lesson and one day I have to go back, apologise and make it right to an entire community when the time is right.

^[2] “A Journey of Personal Responsibility” – my speech about finally getting a degree at age 42.