

PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

Elfreda Sheriff

SME Trade Academy Participant



The SME Trade Academy Participant Reviews

The ITC SME Trade Academy Participant Reviews are the result of a series of interviews conducted with course participants having successfully completed at least 5 online courses. They aim not only to highlight the practical benefits of online learning for ITC beneficiaries, but also to illustrate the difference which ready access to online educational and training materials can have in the lives of individuals.

The following interview has been lightly edited for clarity and brevity.

Testimonial – Elfreda Sheriff

Elfreda Sheriff is the Founder of KiSah Consulting, a Nigeria-based firm that provides skills development, research, policy advice, and trade facilitation support for micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Africa. She has worked on multiple research projects to create a business enabling environment for small businesses on the continent. Elfreda's background is in business management and policy advisory. To date, she has trained over five hundred enterprises.



'Best discovery I made during the [COVID-19] lockdown. Practical and relevant lessons that I've used in training SMEs and improving my knowledge. Thank you, SME Trade Academy! #twentycertificates.'

Elfreda Sheriff, Nigeria

Q1: Did you find the courses which you followed relevant to your professional activities?

I discovered the SME Trade Academy on LinkedIn. The lockdown had just started, and work activities had come to a halt. Even though office activities had stopped, I was still digitally mentoring MSME owners. I was motivated to start following ITC courses because I wasn't going into the office. After the first two classes, my motivation became a quest for knowledge. Each course I completed felt like I just read a book because I gained so much relevant knowledge.

I found the courses very relevant to supporting and promoting a competitive environment for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. As a MSME consultant myself, I am always searching for content that will support the small business owners I work with. Our goal at KiSah is to provide practical skills development for MSMEs to help them sustain and grow their businesses. In my constant search for content, the ITC SME Trade Academy courses offered gave me so many relevant topics. The cases helped support the learning material. One of the best parts is that you can download the lectures and use it as a reference in the future. I thought this was incredible.

59%

of SME Trade Academy participants enrol in more than one course





Q2: Please tell us your thoughts about your e-learning experience with the SME Trade Academy.

The learning experience was remarkable, and I enjoyed the flexibility of the online courses. When I first signed up, I did not know what to expect, as I was homeschooling four kids (each nine years old and younger)... I wondered how I was going to complete the courses I had signed up for. When I first logged in, I realized that you could complete the courses at your own pace. I love that the courses are set up in module format. With the module approach, I planned to complete one module every evening after homeschooling activities. The program's flexibility enabled me to complete the courses within their required two weeks. I then registered for additional courses because I knew I could time myself. Some of the courses were so interesting that I would complete them in a day.

The SME Trade Academy is an excellent resource for organizations, like my company, that work to support small enterprises. The courses are practical. You could complete a class today and already be knowledgeable on the topic. I wish that more MSMEs knew about the Academy and would take advantage of its offering of free online courses. I am so thrilled I discovered the ITC SME Trade Academy!

'Investment is not just about physical infrastructure, or direct investment in factories. Investment is also about any country's biggest asset – its people. Investing in human capital and building skilled work forces is key to success in the 21st century. This is why we will continue to focus on building skills for trade through the SME Trade Academy.'

Arancha Gonzalez,
Former Executive Director of the ITC

Introducing the SME Trade Academy

ITC's SME Trade Academy offers a series of online courses and access to educational materials on a range of trade-related topics. It aims to provide staff in trade and investment support institutions (TISIs), small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and policymakers with access to vocational training in order to assist them in their daily activities.

Browse the SME Trade Academy course catalog and enroll to any course free of charge at

[LEARNING.INTRACEN.ORG](https://learning.intracen.org)

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