

ORABO · THE JAPA SERIES · VOL. 01

The Japa Readiness Guide

A clear-eyed field manual for leaving well, not just leaving. What to do, what to avoid, and how to know you are ready.

WHO WROTE THIS



Abiodun (Prince) Bello

FOUNDER & CEO, ORABOSS TECHNOLOGIES
CREATOR OF ORABO

Abiodun (Prince) Bello is the founder and CEO of Oraboss Technologies and the creator of Orabo. Over eighteen years across Nigeria, South Africa, and the United States, he built the infrastructure behind systems millions of Africans relied on daily: cloud platforms serving tens of thousands of concurrent users, zero-downtime banking migrations covering 1.2 million accounts, and security frameworks across a dozen data centers.

He built Orabo because the japa journey is drowning in confident, outdated, and sometimes predatory advice, and the people making life-changing decisions deserve better. This guide is the distilled version of what Orabo does at scale: rigorous, honest, and built for the specific realities of leaving Africa well.

"Japa is a dream. We help you plan it, verify it, and live it."

READ THIS FIRST

Why this guide has no visa fees in it.

Immigration numbers move every quarter. Filing fees change. Salary thresholds jump. The cut-off score that qualified someone in March can disqualify them by September. A visa bulletin is a living document, and a printed number becomes a lie the moment the policy shifts.

So this guide teaches the part that does not expire: how to think about the move, the mistakes that sink people, the order to do things in, and how to tell when you are genuinely ready. That knowledge is durable. It will still be true next year.

Every live number stays out of these pages on purpose. When you reach a point that needs a real figure, your take-home in Dallas, whether your profile clears EB-2 NIW, what the move actually costs, you run it in a tool that updates the day the rules do. The chapters teach; the tools make it personal.

IMPORTANT · PLEASE READ

This guide is educational, not legal advice. It explains how migration pathways generally work so you can make informed decisions. It is not a substitute for advice from a licensed immigration attorney, and it does not create an attorney-client relationship. Immigration rules change often and vary by individual circumstance. Before you file anything or rely on any pathway, verify current requirements with official government sources (USCIS, UKVI, IRCC) or a qualified attorney. Orabo's tools help you assess and prepare; they do not replace legal counsel. Field notes in this guide are composite scenarios drawn from common experiences; names are invented.

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Ten chapters. One journey.

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Every chapter ends where reading ends and doing begins: at the tool that makes it yours.

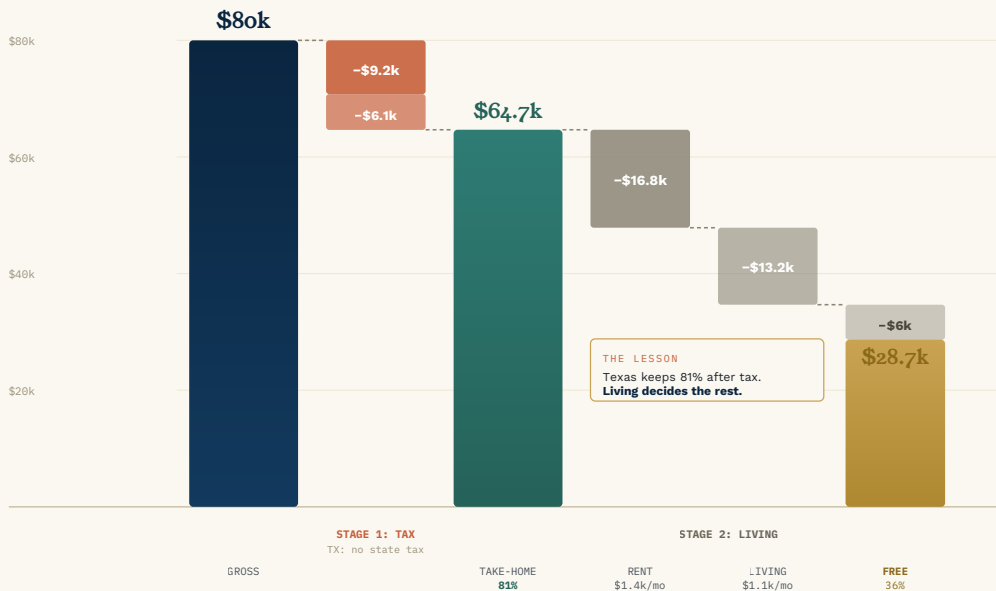
01

Is japa actually worth it?

Before the visa, before the packing, one question most people never sit still long enough to answer.

FIG. 1.1 · AN \$80K OFFER IN DALLAS

What actually reaches your pocket



The offer says \$80,000 and something lifts in your chest. Converted to naira it is a number that ends arguments. The pressure is real too: everyone back home is watching, and staying can feel like failing. Which is exactly why the math must be yours, not the crowd's. That headline is gross, and the money falls a long way before it reaches you. The good news for Dallas: Texas has no state income tax, so after federal tax and FICA you keep about **81 percent**, better than California or New York would leave you.

Then living begins. Rent on a one-bedroom runs around \$1,400 a month, everyday life another \$1,100, and remittances home do not pause because you emigrated. What is genuinely free, after everything, is closer to **\$2,400 a month**. That is not a reason to stay. Millions build extraordinary lives on that number. It is a reason to plan against it, not against the offer.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Emeka, 31, a backend engineer from Lekki, accepted a Dallas offer the day he converted it to naira. Month one brought the deposit, a car, and a five-week wait for the first paycheck. He had planned against the gross, and the gross was never coming.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 Comparing gross abroad to net at home.** Your Lagos salary is money in hand. The Dallas offer is not, until tax and living take their share. Compare take-home to take-home.
- 02 Ignoring the landing runway.** US apartments often want a deposit plus the first month before you hold keys, and your first paycheck can be weeks away. Newcomers with thin US credit get asked for more, not less.
- 03 Chasing the biggest number, not the biggest kept.** An \$80k offer in no-tax Texas beats \$95k in coastal California by several thousand dollars a year once state tax and rent are counted. We ran the math; the tool runs yours.
- 04 Treating remittances as optional.** For most Nigerians they are not. Budget them from day one instead of meeting them as a monthly shock.

WHAT TO DO

- 1** Rebuild the offer as **take-home**: subtract federal tax and FICA (Texas adds no state tax), then rent, living, and remittances for your target city.
- 2** Set aside a **landing runway** of three to six months of expenses as its own line, before you fly.
- 3** Run a **five-year view**: what you keep in Dallas versus what you keep staying. Decide on that number.

► NOW APPLY IT TO YOUR OFFER

Take-Home & Worth-It Calculator

You have the framework. Put in your real offer and city to see your actual take-home and five-year position, with current data for your city.

orabo.app/migration-worth-it →

02

Where should I go?

The best country is not the one with the best photos. It is the one whose queue actually moves for your profile.

FIG. 2.1 · SAME PROFILE, FOUR DOORS

Four destinations run four different systems

United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Europe
<p>EVIDENCE-DRIVEN</p> <p>Talent routes reward a strong record, no job offer needed. Employer routes tie you to the job.</p> <p>Diaspora: Houston is the hub; Dallas is the fast-growing second city.</p> <p>Moves fastest when your evidence is strong.</p>	<p>POINTS-DRIVEN</p> <p>Federal draws score age, education, and language. Category draws shift, so queues move unevenly.</p> <p>Diaspora: Toronto and Brampton lead; Calgary is growing quickly.</p> <p>Moves fastest when young, degreed, strong English.</p>	<p>ENDORSEMENT + SPONSOR</p> <p>Global Talent runs on endorsement, no job needed. Skilled Worker needs a sponsor.</p> <p>Diaspora: London and Peckham are the heart; Manchester follows.</p> <p>Moves fastest with an endorsed field or sponsor.</p>	<p>COUNTRY BY COUNTRY</p> <p>Not one queue. National schemes differ widely, and language often decides more than forms.</p> <p>Diaspora: smaller and scattered; strongest in Italy and Germany.</p> <p>Moves fastest when one country fits your trade.</p>

THE LESSON

Choose the queue that moves for YOUR profile, not the country with the best photos.

A 29-year-old with strong English may fly through points. A 41-year-old researcher may find evidence routes faster. Same dream, different doors.

Four destinations dominate the Nigerian conversation, and they run four different systems. The United States rewards evidence: talent routes for strong records, employer routes for sponsored offers. Canada runs points: age, education, and language decide who gets invited, and category draws shift the queue without warning. The United Kingdom runs endorsement and sponsorship. Europe is not one queue at all; it is a country-by-country patchwork where language often decides more than paperwork.

Same person, four different outcomes. And landing softness matters as much as the visa: Houston and Dallas, Toronto and Brampton, and London's Peckham carry Nigerian communities that make the first year survivable. Choosing with the heart is human; the heart just should not choose alone.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Amaka picked Canada because her cousins were there and the winters looked beautiful on Instagram. Two years in a points queue that barely moved for her category, while her research record already fit a US route she never tested.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Choosing by Instagram, not by queue behavior.** The country with the best photos and the country where your profile clears fastest are rarely the same place.
- 02 **Ignoring re-licensing.** A Nigerian doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or lawyer can restart years of exams and supervised practice. Check your profession's path before you pick the country, not after you land.
- 03 **Following the surge.** When one route gets popular it gets crowded, and then it gets tightened. The crowd's route is usually priced in by the time you join it.
- 04 **Treating family as an afterthought.** Schools, winters, flight costs home, and who is already there decide your first two years more than the visa category does.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Shortlist the **two or three destinations where a real route exists** for your profile today, not for the person you plan to become.
- 2 Check **landing softness** for each: your profession's licensing path, diaspora density, and what a first year costs.
- 3 **Compare them on the same criteria**, pick one primary and one backup, and stop re-litigating the choice every week.

► PUT YOUR SHORTLIST ON ONE SCREEN

Compare Destinations

Stack your shortlisted countries side by side on cost, pathways, and fit for your profile, and settle the argument with data instead of vibes.

orabo.app/compare →

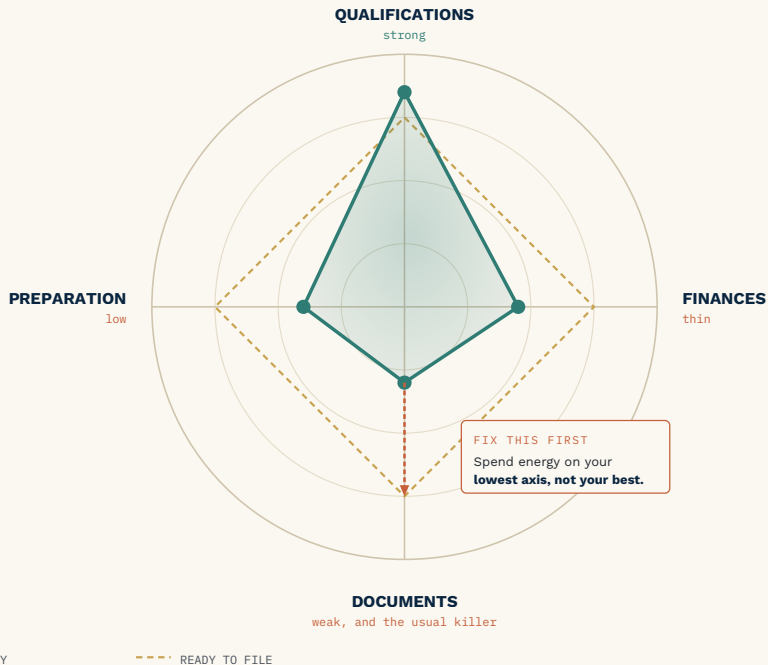
03

Am I ready?

Readiness has four dimensions. Almost everyone is strong in one and quietly blind to the other three.

FIG. 3.1 · MAP THE WHOLE SHAPE

Four axes. Most people build one.



Ask someone if they are ready to japa and they answer with the one axis they are strongest in. The PhD holder says qualifications. The saver says money. Each mistakes a single tall spike for a finished shape, and the flat axes are where the plan quietly breaks. Nobody enjoys hearing not yet; hearing it early, from yourself, is what saves the money.

Readiness is four things at once. **Qualifications:** does your profile clear the bar. **Finances:** can you fund the move and the landing. **Documents:** can you prove what you claim. **Preparation:** do you know the sequence. For Nigerian applicants the quiet killer is almost always documents: issuing-body verification, MFA authentication, NYSC records, and sworn translations take months, and a gap found late stalls everything.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Tunde had the PhD and the savings. What stalled him was a name: WAEC said Babatunde O. Adeyemi, his passport said Tunde Adeyemi. The affidavit, the newspaper notice, and the corrections took four months he had not planned for.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Grading themselves on their best axis.** Confidence in one dimension hides three weak ones. The strong axis is not the one that needs your attention.
- 02 **Leaving documents for last.** The chain of verification and authentication runs on its own slow queues, and institutions can be offline for weeks. This axis moves last if you start it last.
- 03 **Discovering a gap after filing.** A missing document found in month one is an errand. Found after you file, it becomes a Request for Evidence, a stalled case, and months you do not get back.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Score yourself **honestly on all four axes**, low to high. Write the numbers down so you cannot flinch away from the weak ones.
- 2 Put your energy on the **lowest axis first**, not the one that already feels good.
- 3 Start the **document trail now**, in parallel, because it is the slowest to move and the most common to stall.

► SCORE YOURSELF HONESTLY

Readiness Score

Score all four axes in minutes and see the one to fix first, with a step-by-step plan to close the gap before you file.

orabo.app/readiness-score →

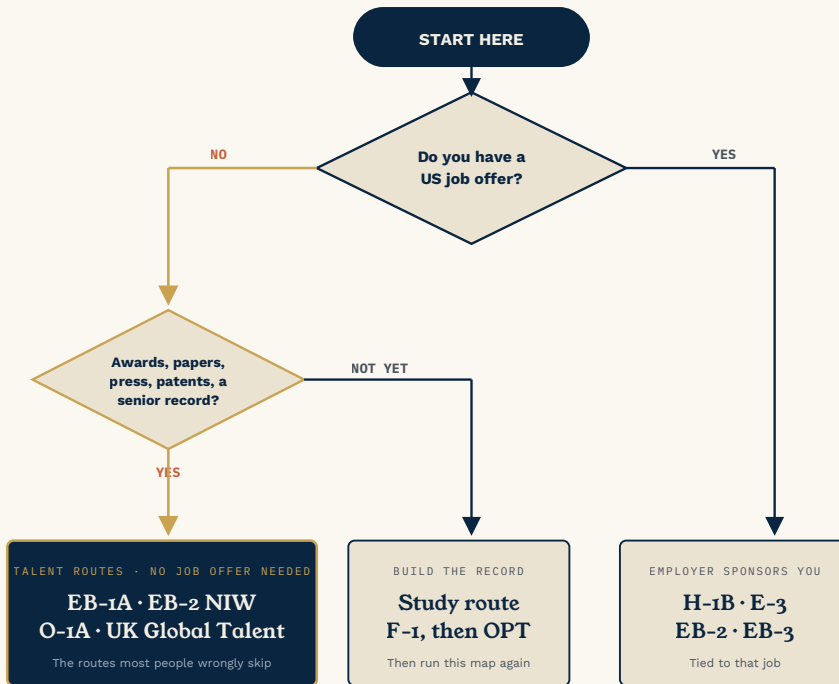
04

Which visa actually fits you?

Most people apply to the route their friends used. The right question is which route your evidence already fits.

FIG. 4.1 · FIND YOUR DOOR

Start with one honest question



The gold path needs no employer and no offer. Most African professionals rule it out on instinct, mistaking "extraordinary" for "famous." It rarely means famous.

The map starts with one honest question: do you have a US job offer? If yes, employer routes like H-1B carry you, but they tie your status to that job. If no, most people stop there, and that is the mistake. The talent routes, **EB-1A, EB-2 NIW, O-1A, and UK Global Talent**, need no job offer. The quiet voice saying you are not extraordinary is usually wrong about what the word means: it is a legal standard met with evidence, not celebrity.

The mechanics differ. **EB-1A and EB-2 NIW are true self-petitions:** you file for yourself. **O-1A needs a US petitioner**, though an agent can serve, not only an employer. **UK Global Talent needs endorsement** from a designated body. Be clear-eyed too: these routes are real and they are rigorous. Evidence bars are high, refusals happen, and a weak filing wastes money and morale. The work is knowing your evidence before you spend.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Ngozi, an ML researcher in Yaba, waited three years for a sponsor because she assumed extraordinary meant famous. Her publications, judging, and a national award already fit an NIW filing. Nobody had told her the bar was evidence, not celebrity.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Reading "extraordinary" as "famous."** Engineers, researchers, doctors, and founders with strong regional records clear the standard more often than they believe.
- 02 **Discounting African evidence.** A national award in Nigeria, judging a Lagos hackathon, press in a major African outlet: these count. Applicants throw away qualifying evidence because it is not Western.
- 03 **Copying a friend's route.** Your cousin's H-1B story is not a strategy. Routes fit evidence shapes, not friendships. The wrong route with a strong profile still loses.
- 04 **Waiting for an offer they do not need.** People sit for years hoping to be sponsored while already holding a record a talent route would accept today.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 **Inventory your evidence** against the criteria buckets: awards, press, judging others' work, original contributions, leadership, high remuneration, publications.
- 2 **Pick the route by evidence shape:** strongest overall record points at EB-1A; national-interest work at NIW; a US venture or role at O-1A; UK ambitions at Global Talent.
- 3 **Build the missing evidence deliberately:** judging, publishing, and documented impact can be earned in months if you know which bucket is thin.

▶ TEST YOUR OWN PROFILE

Visa Eligibility Checker

Answer questions about your record and see which of the four talent routes your evidence fits today, and what is missing for the others.

orabo.app/visa-eligibility →

05

Can I afford the move?

The salary question is the easy one. The move itself has a price most people never add up until it is too late.

FIG. 5.1 · BUDGET IN THREE BUCKETS

The money moves in three phases



Plan all three before you go. Most people fund bucket one, ignore bucket two, and land in a hole.

Affording the move is three separate questions, not one. **Before you fly**, one-time costs stack up while you still earn nothing: visa and petition fees, exams and credential evaluation, a one-way flight, document authentication, and an FX buffer. **The first three to six months** are the runway most people forget: a deposit plus first month's rent, furniture, transport, and a gap before the first paycheck clears.

Only the third bucket, **steady state**, is the monthly math the salary talk assumes. Going broke abroad is lonelier than being broke at home; plan so you never learn that firsthand. The people who move well fund all three buckets before they board.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Seyi funded the visa, the exams, and the flight, and landed in Irving with two weeks of cash. The first paycheck was five weeks out. He spent his first American month on a cousin's floor, employed and broke at the same time.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Budgeting the flight, forgetting the runway.** The ticket is the cheap part. The deposit, furniture, and the wait for the first paycheck are what empty the account.
- 02 **Moving savings at the worst FX moment.** Converting everything in one panic transfer at a bad rate quietly costs a fortune. Plan the currency move like a line item.
- 03 **Underestimating US credit friction.** With no US credit history, expect larger deposits and a guarantor request. That is a bucket-two cost, not a surprise.
- 04 **Forgetting home keeps calling.** Remittances and one-off family needs continue. A move budget that ignores them is fiction.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Build **three separate budgets**: pre-departure one-time, landing runway, and steady-state monthly. Never merge them.
- 2 Save the **runway before you book the flight**. Three to six months of Dallas expenses, ring-fenced and untouched.
- 3 Plan the **currency move** deliberately: rate, timing, and a buffer for the gap before you earn in dollars.

► COST YOUR OWN MOVE

Cost-of-Living & Move Calculator

Build all three buckets for your target city with current cost data, so you know the real number before you commit, not after you land.

orabo.app/cost-of-living →

06

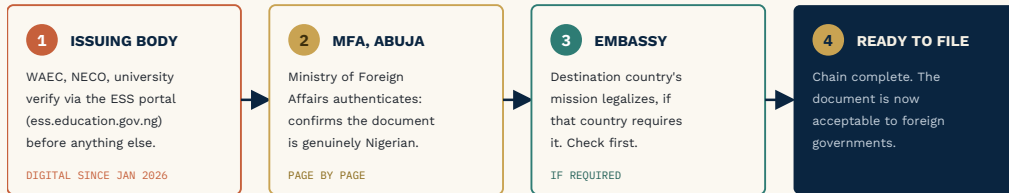
What do I need to file?

Adjudicators score evidence. They do not count pages. And Nigerian documents follow a chain most guides get wrong.

FIG. 6.1 · THE NIGERIAN DOCUMENT CHAIN

No apostille shortcut. A chain instead.

Nigeria is not in the Hague Apostille system. Nigerian documents need the full chain below.



PARALLEL TRACK · DO NOT CONFUSE THE TWO

Credential evaluation (WES, ECE) is a separate thing.

Authentication proves your document is real. Evaluation translates your degree into US or Canadian equivalency. Many pathways need both. Run th

THE LESSON

Each link has its own queue. The chain takes months, not days. Start it before you need it.

The document found missing in month one is an errand. The same gap after filing is a stalled case.

Here is what generic guides get wrong: they tell Nigerians to "get an apostille." **Nigeria is not a member of the Hague Apostille Convention**, so there is no apostille for Nigerian documents. Instead there is a chain: the issuing body verifies (WAEC, NECO, and universities now run through the Ministry of Education's ESS portal), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja authenticates, and the destination country's embassy legalizes if required. Paperwork exhaustion is real; the chain rewards the patient and punishes the late.

Separate from all of that is **credential evaluation** (WES or ECE), which translates your degree into US or Canadian equivalency. Authentication proves the paper is real; evaluation says what it is worth. Many pathways need both, and each has its own queue. Run them in parallel.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Bola started document authentication the week her petition was ready to file. The verification queue, the MFA queue, and the embassy queue each took their own weeks. Filing slipped by a season she could have saved.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Hunting for a Nigerian apostille.** It does not exist. Chasing it wastes weeks. The chain is verification, then MFA authentication, then embassy legalization where required.
- 02 **Name mismatches across documents.** WAEC says one name order, your passport says another, your degree adds a middle name. Adjudicators flag it. Fix consistency first, with a sworn affidavit and newspaper publication where needed.
- 03 **Starting the chain when the petition is ready.** Each link has its own queue and the chain takes months. A gap found after filing becomes a Request for Evidence and a stalled case.
- 04 **Submitting portal printouts.** Foreign institutions want originals carried through the chain, not screenshots of a results checker.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 **Audit name consistency** across passport, WAEC or NECO, degree, NYSC certificate, and bank records before anything else.
- 2 **Start the chain now**, in parallel with everything else: issuing-body verification, then MFA authentication, then embassy legalization if your destination requires it.
- 3 **Order credential evaluation early** on its own track, and keep certified copies of every document you send anywhere.

► BUILD YOUR OWN CHECKLIST

Document Checklist

Generate the exact document list for your pathway and destination, with the Nigerian chain built in, so nothing surfaces after you file.

orabo.app/doc-checklist →

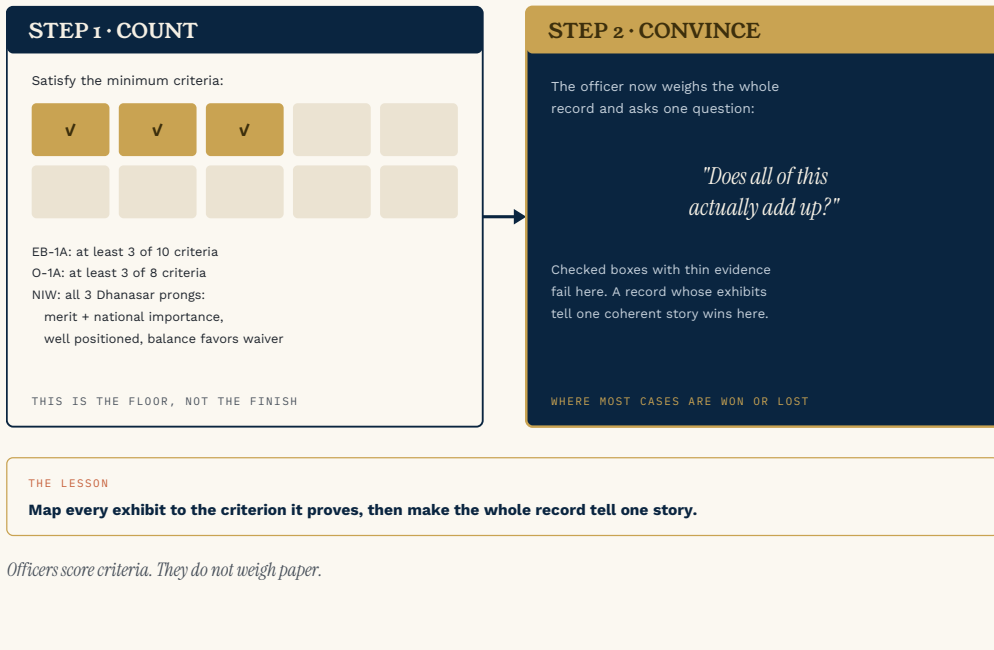
07

Building the petition

A petition is an argument, not a folder. The officer scores evidence; your job is to make the scoring easy.

FIG. 7.1 · HOW YOUR CASE IS ACTUALLY JUDGED

Two steps. Most people prepare for one.



Adjudication runs in two steps. Step one counts: for EB-1A you must satisfy at least three of ten criteria, for O-1A three of eight, and for NIW the three Dhanasar prongs: substantial merit and national importance, well positioned to advance the endeavor, and on balance a benefit in waiving the job offer. Step two convinces: the officer weighs the whole record and asks whether it truly adds up. In recent years the final merits step is where most strong-looking petitions are won or lost.

Assembling a case about your own worth is overwhelming; that is normal. The cure is structure, not more paper: an evidence matrix that maps every exhibit to the exact criterion or prong it proves, and a brief that argues rather than asserts. Letters help only when they cite verifiable facts an officer can check. Praise without evidence weighs nothing.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Chidi sent nine hundred pages: certificates since secondary school, praise letters, every slide he ever presented. The officer's job is scoring criteria, not weighing paper. Three criteria argued clearly would have beaten the pile.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Volume over argument.** Nine hundred pages assert; an evidence matrix proves. Officers score criteria, they do not weigh paper.
- 02 **Praise letters without facts.** "Brilliant and dedicated" weighs nothing. Letters that cite checkable results and independent adoption weigh a lot. Recommenders often expect you to draft; keep every fact true and verifiable.
- 03 **Preparing only for step one.** Checking three boxes is the floor. Petitions increasingly lose at final merits, where the record must add up to one coherent story.
- 04 **Ignoring comparable evidence.** Some fields do not map neatly onto the criteria. The rules let you argue comparable evidence; most people never do.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Build the **evidence matrix first**: each criterion or prong you claim, mapped to numbered exhibits that prove it.
- 2 Write the brief as an **argument**: claim, evidence, why it satisfies the standard, then the final-merits story that ties it together.
- 3 Commission letters from **independent recommenders** and give each one specific, verifiable facts to anchor.

▶ START YOUR CASE STRUCTURE

Petition Builder Hubs

Walk the EB-1A, EB-2 NIW, O-1A, and UK Global Talent flows step by step, with the evidence matrix built for you. O-1A and UK Global Talent hubs are one click away.

orabo.app/eb-immigration →

08

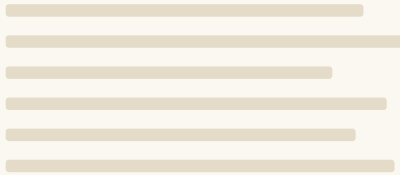
Telling your story

Officers and admissions committees fund a person and a plan. A list of roles is neither.

FIG. 8.1 · TWO WAYS TO TELL THE SAME LIFE

A list of roles is not a story

The CV in sentences

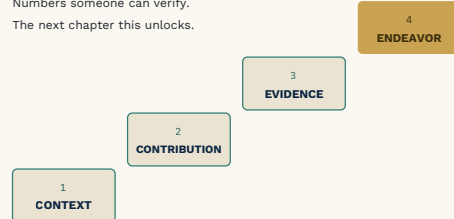


Roles held. Dates. Duties.
Nothing an officer can fund.

READS AS: NOTHING CHANGED

The four-beat arc

The problem you met.
What changed because of you.
Numbers someone can verify.
The next chapter this unlocks.



READS AS: FUND THIS PERSON

THE LESSON

Officers and committees fund a person and a plan. State the fact, attach the number, move on.

Facts with numbers are not boasting. They are testimony with receipts.

The CV says what you held; the story says what changed because you were there. A statement that repeats the CV in sentences wastes its one chance. The arc that works has four beats: **context** (the problem you met), **contribution** (what you built or changed), **evidence** (numbers someone can verify), and **endeavor** (the specific next chapter this visa or admission unlocks).

For many Nigerians the hard part is cultural: we are raised not to boast, and under-selling reads to a Western gatekeeper as weakness, not humility. Writing about yourself will feel like bragging. It is not. It is testimony with receipts. State the fact, attach the number, move on.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Kemi's CV listed every role since 2011, and her statement repeated the CV in sentences. Nowhere did it say what she built, who used it, or why it mattered. The rewrite led with one project, three numbers, and the plan it funded. Same person, different verdict.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **The CV in sentences.** If the statement only restates the CV, one of the two documents is wasted.
- 02 **Under-selling as humility.** Cultural modesty reads as weak evidence. Facts with numbers are not boasting.
- 03 **No endeavor.** Gatekeepers fund what is next. A story that ends in the past gives them nothing to approve.
- 04 **One generic statement for every door.** Each audience scores differently. Tailor the same true story to each.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Draft the **arc in order**: context, contribution, evidence, endeavor.
- 2 Attach a **defensible number** to every claim; cut any claim you cannot defend.
- 3 Keep one **master document**, then tailor per application instead of rewriting from zero.

► DRAFT IT WITH STRUCTURE

SOP Writer & CV Review

Turn your record into the four-beat arc, then have the CV scored against what officers and committees actually read for.

orabo.app/sop-writer →

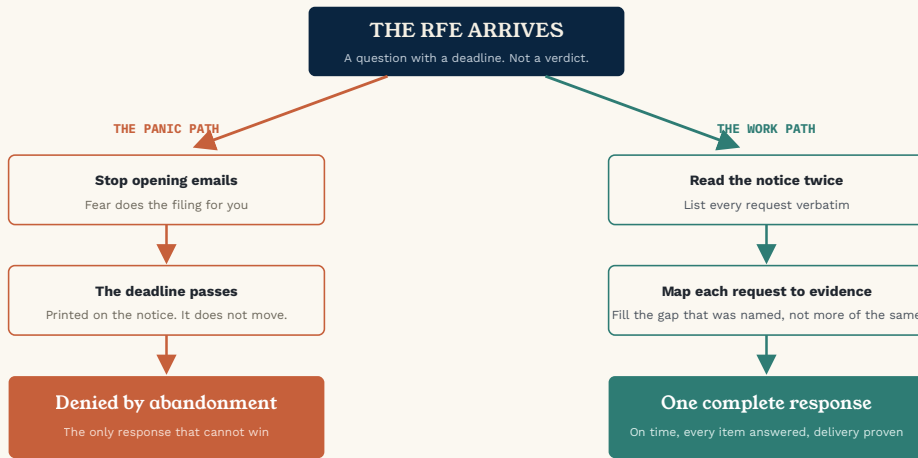
09

The RFE is not a no

A Request for Evidence is a question with a deadline. Panic answers neither.

FIG. 9.1 · THE ENVELOPE AND THE FORK

Two paths out of an RFE. Only one can win.



THE LESSON

An RFE is a question. You usually get one full answer: make it complete, and make it on time.

Well-built responses recover cases every day. Silence never does.

An RFE means the officer needs more before deciding. A NOID means they intend to deny unless you change their mind. Neither is a refusal. Both carry a fixed deadline printed on the notice, and silence is the one guaranteed loss: no response means denial by abandonment, with the answering evidence often sitting unused on someone's drive. The panic when that envelope arrives is real. So is the fact that well-built responses recover cases every day.

Scrutiny has climbed in recent years, and requests sometimes demand things the rules never required. The discipline is the same either way: read the notice twice, list exactly what is asked, and answer each item once, completely, on time. This is also the moment scam agents circle, selling guaranteed outcomes to frightened people. Nobody can guarantee an outcome. Anyone who promises one is charging you for your panic.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Uche got the RFE on a Friday and stopped opening emails. The deadline passed, and the case died as an abandonment, not a refusal. The evidence that would have answered it was sitting in his drive the whole time.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 Panic and abandon.** Missing the deadline converts a question into a denial. It is the only response that cannot win.
- 02 Answering the fear, not the question.** Respond to the items listed on the notice, in their order, not to everything you worry about.
- 03 Sending more of the same.** If the officer found a category thin, another stack of the same category stays thin. Fill the gap that was named.
- 04 Buying a guarantee.** The agent who promises approval for a fee is monetizing your fear, not fixing your case.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Read the notice twice** and list every request verbatim, as a checklist.
- 2 Map each request to new or reframed evidence;** have someone independent audit the gap before you respond.
- 3 Respond once, completely, before the deadline,** and keep proof of delivery.

▶ AUDIT BEFORE YOU ANSWER

Petition Audit & RFE Drafter

Have the gap mapped against what the notice actually asks, then draft a response that answers every item once and completely.

orabo.app/petition-audit →

10

**You have
arrived.
Now what?**

Landing is the start line, not the finish. The first ninety days decide how steep the climb is.

FIG. 10.1 · THE FIRST NINETY DAYS

Landing is the start line, not the finish



THE LESSON

Run the sequence, build the scaffolding, calendar the dates. Then help the next person up.

What you learn in your first months is exactly what the next person needs.

The quiet surprise of arrival is the anticlimax: status sorted, and suddenly nobody is watching. What meets you instead is the credit loop: no history means bigger deposits, and no card means no history. The loop breaks with sequence, not luck. Weeks one and two: Social Security number, bank account, secured credit card, state ID, in that order, because each unlocks the next.

Months one to three are for the softer scaffolding: health cover, the diaspora community and professional network that turn a city into a place, and a calendar carrying every status date you must not miss. Then the last step, the one this guide exists for: send the ladder back down. What you learn in your first months is exactly what the next person needs.

FIELD NOTE · COMPOSITE

Femi landed in Dallas with status sorted and assumed the hard part was over. No credit history meant a doubled deposit, and no card meant no history. The secured card he opened in week two broke the loop by spring.

WHERE PEOPLE GO WRONG

- 01 **Treating arrival as the finish.** The credit loop, licensing, and status upkeep are a second project that starts at the airport.
- 02 **Breaking the sequence.** The SSN unlocks the bank, the bank unlocks the secured card, the card builds the history. Out of order, everything waits.
- 03 **Isolating.** Skipping the associations, churches, and professional networks that soften the first year costs more than any fee.
- 04 **Missing a status date.** Renewals and validity windows do not remind you. One missed date can undo years of work.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Weeks one and two: **SSN, bank account, secured credit card, state ID**, in that sequence.
- 2 Months one to three: **health cover, community, professional network**, and a calendar holding every status date.
- 3 Then **send the ladder back down**: share what your first months taught you.

▶ SEND THE LADDER BACK DOWN

Submit Your Story

Your first months will teach you what no guide can. Share the story: real experiences become the field notes of the next edition. And a consultation is there when you need a human.

orabo.app →

Plan it. Verify it. Live it.

You now know more about leaving well than most people who have already left. The plan, the queue, the money, the paper, the petition, the story, the recovery, the landing: none of it is a mystery anymore.

If this guide moved you closer, send it to one person who is still guessing. That is how the ladder goes back down.

Every chapter's tool is waiting at orabo.app. Free to start, current the day the rules change.