

Success Secrets for Interim Executives and Independent Consultants

No longer does an executive need to work for the same company year after year. Nor does a CEO need to spend months looking for the perfect executive candidate. There is a dramatic shift from needing to own an executive's expertise for a number of years to simply leasing expertise on an as-needed basis. *How I Fired My Boss and Made More Money* provides an insider view of how top-level executives are enjoying long and accomplished careers as interim executives and independent consultants.

"The gig economy is most often thought about as Uber drivers, Grubhub delivery people, Task Rabbit helpers, and so on. However, the increase in non-permanent work arrangements also now extends to C-level executives, who may not be accustomed to the freelance life. McAlister's and Wasley's book breaks new ground by helping senior managers understand the relevant context and providing the how-tos for setting up a business and succeeding as an independent executive."

Andrew Karpie, research director for Spend Matters Network

*"The world is moving, make no mistake about it, in the direction of modularized everything—including employment. The employer of the future hires in more and more variable ways; and the employee of the future has many bosses. At the heart of this is the concept of the interim executive and independent consultant. If that sounds like you, then McAlister and Wasley have written the guidebook to your future. This is *How You Do It* in the employment world of the future."*

Charles H. Green, CEO Trusted Advisor Associates, co-author *The Trusted Advisor*

"In your hands you hold a blueprint for your future. The next ten years is the decade for independents to shine and succeed. Kristen and Pamela share what you need to know and what you need to do in order to position yourself for more prospects and clients. The bonus revealed is how you can have more flexibility and freedom to create the life you want."

Mark LeBlanc, author of *Never Be the Same* and *Growing Your Business!*



Kristen McAlister joined Pamela Wasley to purchase the executive talent firm Cerius and serves as president. She is a national speaker and is published on topics ranging from operations and productivity to talent management and the contingent workforce.



Pamela Wasley is one of the founders and CEO of Cerius. She has served on several private boards, and is a frequent national speaker and is published on topics of mergers and acquisitions, the workforce of the future, and global contingent workforces.

\$20

How I Fired My Boss & Made More Money

Kristen McAlister & Pamela Wasley



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INSIDER SECRETS

from Successful Interim Executives and Independent Consultants

Kristen McAlister & Pamela Wasley

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CHAPTER 3

Brand Yourself

Your Executive Brand + Your Expertise + Perceived Perception = Your Differentiation and Value to a Client

Consider marketing as the product development area of your business. In the case of independent executives, the product is their brand. Without a brand, you are likely seen as the proverbial “consultant who decided to hang a shingle out and see what happened.” This is becoming so critical that we are seeing a growing sector of consultants serving the independent executive industry starting to gain momentum. Branding and marketing experts have realized there is an untapped marketplace for independent executives. Essentially, consultants are providing their expertise as a product to the independent executive. This is being driven by the growth of the segment and the extent of the channels and tools for taking your brand to market. We expect to see this trend continue to expand as executives build and grow their businesses around what they do best. Where there’s a growing business, there’s a need for services and support.

The importance of building an executive brand has been on the rise in the past decade. With the advancement of technology and growth of social media, we believe that today more than

ever before, it is important to create the right brand to convey the impact you can create for your clients. One of the biggest challenges for executives with long careers is communicating what they can do for potential clients. Those wanting to market themselves independently have to create a personal brand to get the right message across. Not everyone an executive comes in contact with can spend a few hours discussing backgrounds, resumes, CVs, bios, and understanding what they have done, what they do best, and how they can help companies. Instead, they must rely on small snippets of information and messaging to convey the key points.

What Is an Executive Brand?

An executive brand is what people say about you when you are not in the room and is defined by the executive. Although the latter is shaped by experiences associated with the corporate brand, the two are distinctly separate entities. Essentially, the top ten results on Google when you search for the executive highlight the executive brand. Creating an executive brand takes time and effort, but can become one of the most useful and effective tools in building your business.

Creating an Executive Brand

Start with your past. Get your entire history on paper so you can easily pull what you need. Jot down all of your work experiences, skills, and achievements in a single document. Most of this information you can pull from your CV, resume, portfolio, and online profiles. Reflect on your past work history and make a list of the results you have delivered and

can deliver to future clients. By determining what value you bring to a client, you can better market and sell yourself.

We get the opportunity to have background discussions regularly with executives. Without fail, it ends up as a branding discussion. One inevitably leads to the other. We can't talk through an executive's background without ending up at, "How do you impact companies?" It all starts with the background. It is surprising what some tend to forget, especially if they have been independent for some time.

Here's one example of a common discussion we have.

Frank had been working diligently for months on his marketing. He hired someone to help him build a website, assist with his messaging, and was working with a few other executives on business referrals. Frank was giving an overview of what he did and how he helped companies. He was very excited about the headline on his home page, "Business Transformation." He then went on to talk about all the various ways he transforms businesses through process re-engineering, culture change, etc. About fifty minutes into the phone call, he shared a story about how he and a business partner had purchased a company out of bankruptcy and two years later, had grown it more than 800 percent and was in the black with \$220 million in profit. Kristen's response was, "Why are you waiting until this point in the conversation to mention this? Make this your lead-in!" It had been about eight years ago and he had somewhat forgotten about it. Get your history down on paper and start from there.