

Preparing for your next season

Finding a new purpose beyond the corporate world

When you are in the heat of the battle as a corporate executive, it's hard to imagine what's on the other side. Your life is consumed with phone calls, meetings, travel, dinners out, presentations, explanations, expense reports and budgets. There are endless requests for your time and point of view. It is a relentlessly busy, all-consuming lifestyle.



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Managing partner

My Next Season

After over two decades of helping senior executives on the "productivity" side of the equation, Leslie and her business partners have started My Next Season to help executives transition from careers oriented around productivity to lives anchored in purpose.

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The higher you are in your company, the more command it has over your non-work time and commitments.

Add to that family obligations and you have a schedule that is long on appointments and short on time.

It is hard, if not impossible, for executives to commit to non-work leadership opportunities due to the unpredictability of their schedules. Even close friendships tend to have a work connection.

Retirement anxiety

But as words such as "retirement" get used with increased frequency, executives can experience a real sense of anxiety as they imagine the implications. What will I do with all that time?

For many, the fears run deep. For all, thoughts/concerns about retirement are deeply personal. Who will I interact with? How will I stay mentally sharp? How will I stay "in the game" of business? What will the relationship with my spouse/children be like if I am home all the time?

After a lifetime of being part of something bigger, it's painful to imagine a future without portfolio or primary affiliation. The natural orientation is about what will be left behind versus what you are moving toward.

A time for reflection

The renaissance happens, though, when the focus shifts away from a life constructed around productivity to one oriented around purpose. It is the opportunity to transition from a season of getting to one of giving. The possibilities are endless.

The often overlooked step in that transition, however, is the pause for intentional thought and discernment.

What have you always wished you had time to do? What activities over the past decades brought you the most joy?

Endless possibilities for giving back

Your gifts can find their way to places where you can make a real, meaningful difference in the lives and futures of other people.

If you are seeking another day job, there are companies who need seasoned talent in key roles. Nonprofit organizations are clamoring for people with strong leadership and organizational skills. Small and midsized boards prefer bright, pragmatic board members who have "been there and done that."

And then there are the little and not-so-little people in your life — who have been waiting patiently (or not so patiently), hoping for more time with you, more opportunities to have you influence their lives and futures.

The possibilities of the next season are truly endless and there is no right answer. It begins, however, with pausing to discern where your next calling is. This transition isn't one from fall to winter but rather spring to summer — and its wonder, promise and possibility unfolds in its own time frame, not according to a corporate calendar. ●



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