

An opportunity to reset

The tools you relinquish are the tools you most need in retirement

When executives transition out of a corporate role into their next season, the three things they most need are their health, openness to a newly defined purpose and companionship on the journey. Ironically, their fulfillment of corporate duties compromises each of these.

Health

Many executives put their own health on hold as they travel around the world crossing time zones back and forth, doing the business of the business. For growing companies, “busy quarters” turn into “busy years” and success comes with increased demands and pressures.

It’s not unusual for executives to be taking medication for high blood pressure, high cholesterol or prescription sleep aids to quiet their minds at the end of stressful days. Exercise time gets squeezed out by early morning flights and late meetings/dinners.

Business dinners always include alcohol and are not known for being heavy on greens or grains. And so the personal health of executives often suffers as they do everything in their power to give the company their best.

Openness to newly defined purpose

Part of what makes having clarity on a next act or “purpose” at the time of retirement so unlikely is that there is no space in weeks, months or years to pause and even contemplate alternatives, let alone road test new possibilities.

It’s not that executives are not open to newly defined futures, but rather they lack the time and capacity to even contemplate them, before they are upon them. It’s not that they are not open to a newly defined purpose; rather they have literally no time to invent or explore one.

Companionship on the journey

It is not unusual for a corporate executive to have stressed marital and/or family relations at the end of their career and few real friends outside of work.

After years of missing events, taking calls/working while on family vacations and living in a world of confidentiality, thereby making it hard to open up with others, it’s no wonder that executives find themselves feeling alone and stressed just as they most need friends and a support system to bridge from old to new.

Fortunately, among the many upsides of retirement is the opportunity to reset everything — except, of course, age.

This is the time to reclaim your life and relationships that matter to you. Eliminate the unhealthy patterns that have crept in. With tremendous runway still ahead, executives can redefine themselves and what they stand for.

It all starts with forgiveness for not having it all figured out ahead of time. There are reasons why you don’t — and it starts with the fact that you have been giving all of yourself to your big, corporate job.

So, what have you always wanted to do? Who have you always wanted to do it with? This is a season of possibilities. ●



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My Next Season: changing the way executives transition from long-standing corporate careers to their next phases of life.