

Non-executive Directorships Consulting

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Overview

Non-executive Directorships Consulting Ltd was founded in October 2016. We provide bespoke and experienced guidance and support to those launching or extending a portfolio career and to senior executives seeking a NED role alongside their day job. The firm works with individuals and groups at FTSE 350 level or equivalent. It has advised senior executives who have served at a range of FTSE 350 groups including Aviva, BP, Diageo, GSK, Land Securities, Savills, Severn Trent and Tesco, large overseas-listed or private groups such as Apple, AXA, Boots, L'Oréal, Mars and Peugeot, private equity groups including Bridgepoint, the Big Four including PwC, KPMG and EY, and banking groups including HSBC, Morgan Stanley, NatWest and UBS.

The firm has worked with over 160 clients in the UK, Europe and internationally to date.

Approach

We offer a career advisory service entirely focused on non-executive development at the most senior level of the market. We continue to innovate within the industry, with a focused, insightful, and strategic approach which keeps the client's need front and centre at all times.

We work only with clients and boards whom we believe we can significantly help, based on an extensive knowledge of the non-executive search process and very strong network of relationships with the UK board search firms, the UK NED and Chair population, and influential board players.

The service aims to help clients reach their goals more rapidly, effectively and enjoyably in a highly competitive market where demand considerably outstrips supply. We work with individuals for a launch period of one to three months and then provide some ongoing support as they move into the market.

Focus of support

The focus of the consultancy is on maximising the speed and likelihood of success of senior individuals, ensuring that the launch process is successful and comprehensive.

Our work to improve outcomes includes:

- Creating a strong non-executive board CV, drawing out the skillsets relevant to the market
- On occasion helping to shape role titles / range of executive or board involvements relevant to the NED space if the executive career is ongoing (with agreement and support of the CEO / Chair)
- Creating a focused non-executive strategy
- Ensuring clients are comprehensively on the radar of the relevant board headhunter group (there are c.40 in the UK in total)
- Ensuring that clients are interacting with the headhunters effectively and making the best impression, including preparing strong answers to the likely questions they will be asked
- Ensuring clients are appropriately prepared for interviews with Chairs and board members at shortlist stage
- Connecting clients to board organisations and platforms
- Connecting clients to Chairs, NEDs and others through a range of introductions and referrals to ensure effective networking, both at the time of launch and subsequently, after initial launch
- Providing a sounding board when looking at mandates and other opportunities
- Connections to the 350 Club and its members

NEDC can be particularly useful to serving executives, who are often time-poor and with reduced bandwidth, and to those at the point of retirement, as we put structure, strategy, momentum and support around their launch and search process.

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The team

Marianne Macdonald

NEDC was founded by Marianne Macdonald. She had spent seven years in the non-executive practice of The Zygos Partnership which, prior to its 2018 sale to Russell Reynolds, was one of the UK's leading board search firms in the non-executive space. There her non-executive search experience spanned all sectors, including financial and professional services, FMCG, aerospace and defence, industrial, retail and utilities, and boards ranging from FTSE100 to FTSE small cap, including family businesses, mutuals and markets.

Before joining The Zygos Partnership in 2010 Marianne had an award-winning career as a broadsheet journalist and latterly spent 10 years interviewing international leaders within the arts, media, politics and sports sectors for UK broadsheet newspapers and magazines, including the Times, Telegraph, Observer, Guardian and Independent.

She has a First in English from New College, Oxford, a Diploma in Journalism from City University, and was a Guardian Student Journalist of the Year.

Alongside Non-executive Directorships Consulting, Marianne is an Ambassador for Nurole and a former a Board Advisor for the MBS Group and career advisor for BCKR, the organisation which works to help senior lawyers create a portfolio.

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James Miller

James Miller has over 10 years of non-executive board headhunting experience from Heidrick & Struggles, JCA Group and The Zygos Partnership, and a total of 19 years of search experience across various sectors and business environments. He focused on Chair and Non-executive Director assignments throughout his search career, primarily FTSE100, FTSE250 and FTSE small cap appointments, as well as advising internationally domiciled and private company boards.

James has worked across a broad range of geographies and sectors, including financial services, industrial, consumer, retail, healthcare and life sciences, technology, professional services and aerospace and defence, and he has experience of building boards in a range of contexts, including working with private equity firms and key stakeholders in preparation for IPOs.

Following a brief investment banking career, James moved into search in 2001 and went on to spend seven years with The Willis Partnership, before joining Heidrick & Struggles. He was a Committee Member of the Executive Research Association.

James has a degree in Classics and Modern Languages from The Queen's College, Oxford, where he was a choral exhibitioner.

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