

How Transitions Advance Your Career



Wendy Glavin, Founder & CEO, [Wendy Glavin Agency](#)

I majored in acting, switched to [communications](#) and began my career at General Electric. I was surrounded by engineers and developers, immersed in complex technical languages, for five years. Since I wasn't studying engineering, being surrounded by my peers was my goal.

Nearly one year later, I was hired by Elkman Advertising and Public Relations. With a diverse account roster, Goldenberg Candy Company, The Philadelphia Economic Development Coalition, and a division of Du Pont, my days were spent overseeing ads, doing media outreach and attending trade shows.

Then, I got married and a sudden move took me to New York City, with no job. While staring out the the floor to ceiling window, I sat and cried. How will I ever make it? I knew no one. Thankfully, my boss at Elkman recommended me to someone at Burson-Marsteller, and I was hired to manage a large division of IBM.

The IBM account was demanding and exciting, with long hours. I loved managing a team and being called in to brainstorm on other accounts. I enjoyed the comradery. But, now pregnant, I dreamed about what life would be like with a child.

Once I had my first son, I knew I couldn't leave him, so I resigned. After having two more sons, a Parisian friend recommended spending the month of July in the south of France. After visiting, I fell in love with the lush fields of sunflowers and lavender, fruit trees, markets and the way of life. Living there felt like it was a second home.

September and the beginning of school brought lots of questions, "Where did you get those earrings? I love your bracelets; can you get the same for me?" Unknowingly, I'd discovered an untapped niche." My college roommate and I formed an LLC and founded a jewelry business, importing jewelry from France to the U.S. After doing shows for *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *Glamour* employees, country clubs, holiday parties, and at The Grand Ole Opry we grew, which felt amazing.

Unfortunately, my business partner lived in Boston, so the travel was becoming too much for her. Soon, my yearly trips to the Paris shows and buying jewelry became cost-prohibitive. Sadly, I had to give it up.

Whenever meeting new people, I spoke passionately about building and growing a business, following your passion and the power of marketing, public relations and social media, available to anyone. I knew I could never go back to a corporate job so I became a consultant. I advised entrepreneurs, startups and agencies in a wide variety of industry sectors, including, business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B).



Throughout 25 years, friends and professional colleagues told me, "I'm so impressed. You keep reinventing yourself." But for me, it's not reinvention, but rather building on my strengths, taking risks and working hard.

My daily mindset:

- Research and learn everything about my industry and my client's business sector
- Spend time reading non-fiction books, the next best thing to going to school
- Take notes on my computer and by-hand, to increase retention
- Listen, observe and take-in all communications both verbal and non-verbal
- Gather and absorb information from people with varying expertise, and day-to-day life
- Learn from people ahead of me by watching TedTalks, podcasts, webinars, blogs and reading articles
- Ask younger people about Snap Chat, their interests, technology, Netflix, Venmo and more
- Be open to constructive feedback and criticism because,

*“Perception is the co-pilot to reality.” – Carla Harris,
Managing Director, Morgan Stanley*

- Maintain a *“growth mindset”* – Carol Dweck
- Learn something new everyday

I’ve been told people feel their original career choice defines them, “I was an accountant for years. Then, I stopped working to raise my kids. Twenty years later, I have no marketable skills.” I heard the same about finance, broadcast television, law, and the list goes on.

If you’re stuck, don’t rely on excuses. Maybe, I’m just scrappy, but I’ve always believed if I continue to learn and grow, I’d get work, or a job. And, I do.

Long ago, my eldest son asked my attorney father, “How do you know when you’ve done your best?” My dad said, “You are the judge of yourself. Only YOU know at the end of the day, if you’ve given 100% and that’s enough.”

How about you? Have you given 100%?

About the Author: Wendy Glavin is Founder and CEO of Wendy Glavin Agency. Wendy is a 20-year veteran of corporate, agency, consulting and small business ownership. From General Electric to Burson-Marsteller, and other B2B2C firms, Wendy’s experience spans a variety of industry sectors. Wendy is a published writer and guest speaker. Please contact Wendy at wendy@wendyglavin.com or through <https://wendyglavin.com/>.