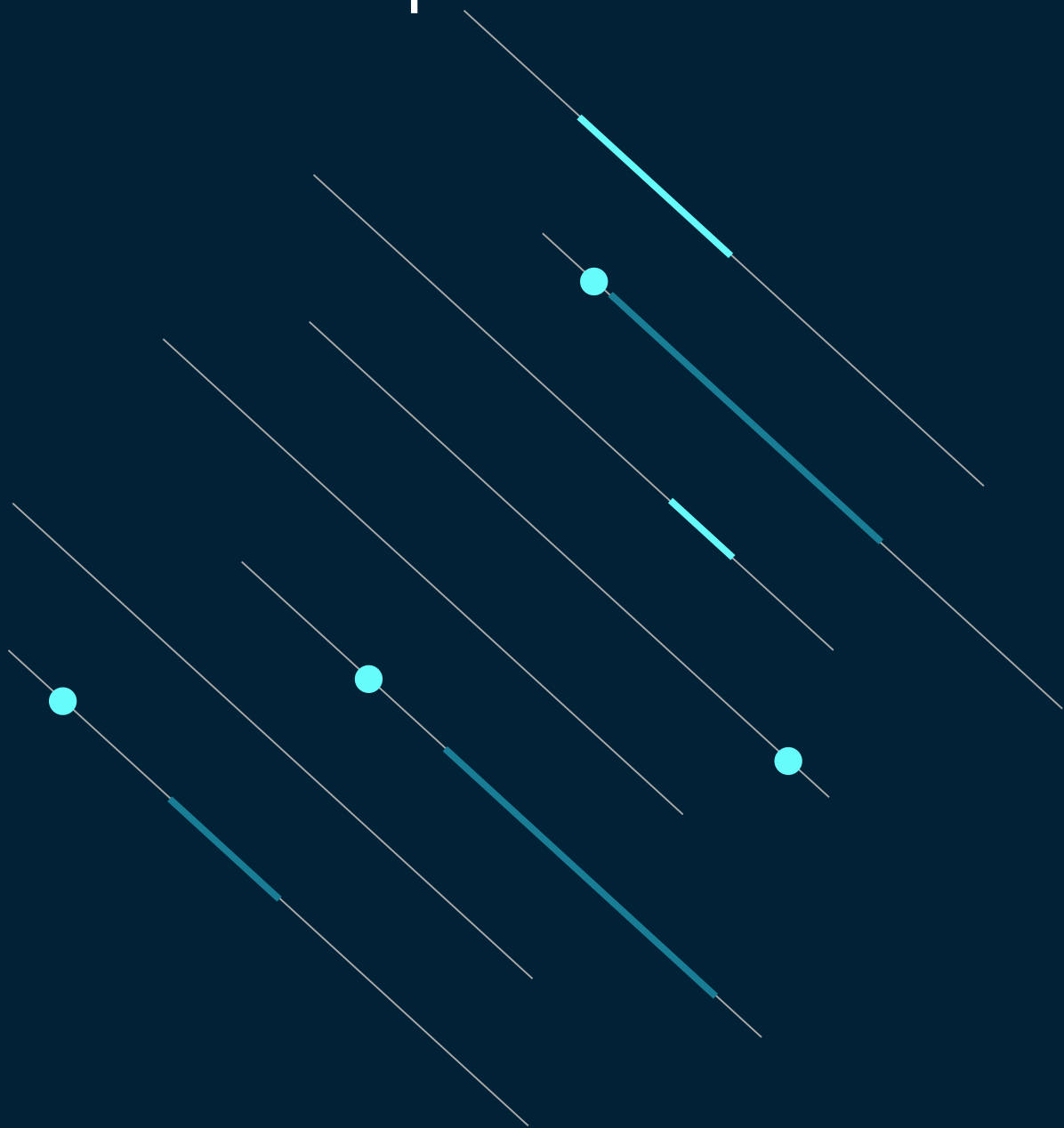


Kelly O. Kay & Jeff Sanders

Partners, Heidrick & Struggles

Show Up to Win: How to Land the Leadership Role You Want



Press Kit and Media Guide

MEET KELLY O. KAY

Partner, Heidrick & Struggles | Global Managing Partner, Enterprise Software and AI Practice



Kelly O. Kay is a partner in Heidrick & Struggles' San Francisco office and the global managing partner of the firm's Enterprise Software and AI Practice.

With 22 years in executive search, Kelly conducts searches worldwide for a wide range of technology companies, from high-growth private and public enterprises with revenues up to \$100 billion.

Kelly specializes in senior go-to-market leadership roles, including board, CEO, COO, CRO, and worldwide sales. He co-founded Heidrick's Sales &

Commercial Officers Practice and is a leading voice on executive talent trends in B2B software. Before executive search, Kelly was a partner at the Center for Corporate Innovation (CCI), a CEO development and strategy organization sponsored by McKinsey & Co., and earlier held senior roles at IBM Corporation and Gemini Management Consulting.

A sought-after talent adviser and public speaker, Kelly's writing has appeared in *Harvard Business Review*, *Forbes*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. His HBR article on resignation best practices "Leave Smart, Land Well" was based on a national survey of more than 6,000 CHROs and senior executives and became one of the publication's most widely read pieces on executive career management.

Kelly holds an MBA from the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business and a bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of San Francisco.



Heidrick.com



@kokay

MEET JEFF SANDERS

Partner, Heidrick & Struggles | Vice Chair & Co-Managing Partner, Global CEO & Board Practice



Jeff Sanders is a vice chair and co-managing partner of the Global CEO & Board of Directors Practice at Heidrick & Struggles.

A member of the firm's Global Management Committee, Jeff has spent nearly three decades specializing in CEO and board succession for some of the world's most consequential organizations.

Jeff has led CEO and board searches for companies including Adobe, Airbnb, Apple, BlackRock, Dell, Home Depot, Microsoft, Salesforce, ServiceNow, Starbucks, Uber, and Visa,

among many others. He has also advised leading private equity and venture capital firms on portfolio company executive talent, including Accel Partners and Benchmark.

Fortune named Jeff to its "40 Under 40—Ones to Watch" list in 2010, and *BusinessWeek* named him one of the "100 Most Influential Executive Recruiters in the World."

He has authored widely read articles on CEO succession planning, board selection, and executive transitions, including for *Forbes* and *Directors & Boards*. He serves on the board of trustees for Catholic Charities of New York.

Jeff holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Arizona and joined Heidrick & Struggles in 1997.



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@jeffsanders2

Show Up to Win How to Land the Leadership Role You Want

• Harvard Business Review Press

To land the leadership role you want, you need to be as strategic about your own career as you are about the business you run.

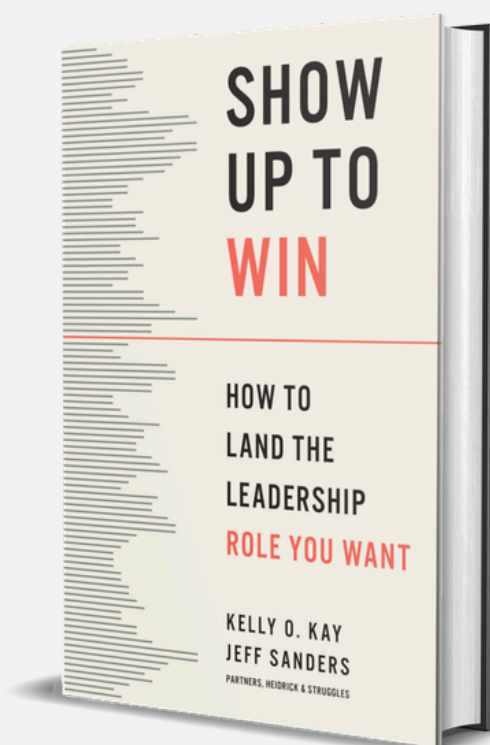
Even the most accomplished executives stumble at the moment of career transition. Credentials matter, but the options you have and the offers you get depend far less on what you've accomplished before and much more on how you show up now.

Kelly O. Kay and Jeff Sanders have spent decades on the other side of the table. As partners at Heidrick & Struggles — collectively responsible for placing hundreds of CEOs, board members, and thousands of senior leaders at some of the world's most consequential organizations — they've observed the patterns that determine who lands the best roles and who gets passed over. And until now, there has been no playbook.

In Show Up to Win, Kay and Sanders share the practical frameworks and decision trees they've developed across more than three decades of executive search. From assessing your value in the market and crafting a compelling personal narrative, to navigating interviews, negotiating your offer, and setting yourself up to thrive from day one, this is a complete guide to one of the highest-stakes transitions in any leader's career.

Written primarily for executives ready to pursue their next role, the lessons in *Show Up to Win* apply to anyone at any level seeking to build a vibrant, purposeful, and extraordinary career.

A career is built one role at a time. This is how you make each one count.



Available July 7, 2026



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Kelly O. Kay and Jeff Sanders are available for interviews, podcast appearances, byline articles, expert commentary, and speaking engagements

- Why great leaders struggle most at the moment of career transition — and what to do about it
- Crucial realizations for high performers: what even the most accomplished leaders get wrong when it's time to move on
- Why executive transitions are won — or lost — in the present, not the past
- Narrative as a competitive advantage: how senior leaders should define and communicate their value in a crowded market
- What executives need to know about how boards and CEOs approach hiring senior leaders
- Why executive hiring is slower, tougher, and more scrutinized than ever — and how candidates can adapt
- The hidden cost of a poor executive transition: what it means for leaders and for companies
- How AI is reshaping executive hiring and what it can't replace
- What three decades of executive search reveal about how leaders actually get hired
- The myth of the perfect role: how senior leaders build extraordinary careers over time
- The myth of the single right career path: how the most fulfilling careers are built by following what inspires you
- What candidates miss about negotiating for a role — and the critical factors that go into getting the right offer
- From candidate to CEO: what changes once the search ends

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

For Both Authors

- As partners at Heidrick & Struggles, you've spent years as experts in executive search. What made you want to write this book now?
- What is the single biggest mistake senior leaders make during a career transition?
- What does it mean to "*show up to win*" and how is that different from just being the most qualified candidate?
- This book is for candidates, but how can its insights help companies find the leaders they need too?
- How has executive hiring changed in the last five years and what do candidates need to understand about that shift?
- You conduct roughly 200 conversations per week with Fortune 1000 companies about executive roles. What patterns do you see that candidates never see?
- How is AI changing executive hiring and what does it mean for how leaders should position themselves?
- What's the most counterintuitive piece of advice in the book?
- You've placed leaders at companies like Apple, Microsoft, Visa, Starbucks, and Airbnb. What separates the candidates who land those roles from equally accomplished leaders who don't?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

For Kelly O. Kay & Jeff Sanders

For Kelly O. Kay

- Your HBR article on resignation best practices was one of the publication's most widely read pieces on executive career management. What do most senior leaders get wrong about how they leave a role?
- You lead the global Software Practice at H&S. How has the executive talent landscape in tech changed, and what does it mean for how tech leaders should manage their careers?
- As someone embedded in the tech sector at the highest level, how is AI changing the way senior leaders are evaluated, and how boards at tech companies are being staffed?

For Jeff Sanders

- You've led CEO searches at some of the most iconic companies in the world — Apple, Adobe, Airbnb, Uber, Visa. What makes a CEO candidate truly different from the rest of the field?
- With CEO tenures shortening and succession planning still a weak spot at most organizations, how do boards balance leadership readiness with immediate needs and long-term performance?
- Fortune named you to its '40 Under 40' list. You've spent your career at the highest levels of executive search. What's the biggest misconception executives have about what boards are actually looking for?

PRAISE FOR SHOW UP TO WIN

"In a business context changing faster than ever, it's difficult for leaders to consider their next move strategically. Kelly and Jeff have created an invaluable guide to the professional and personal questions leaders need to ask—and answer—to build careers with lasting impact." — **Robin Washington**, President & Chief Operating and Financial Officer, Salesforce

"Show Up to Win is candid and actionable. It helps leaders clarify their strengths, position themselves as the best candidate for the roles they want, choose the right path, and confidently navigate each step of their career transition." — **Ryan McInerney**, CEO, Visa

"Kelly and Jeff present a compelling, highly credible process for executives to evaluate the case for personal change at various points in their careers, and to make the most of their experience, insight, and desire for positive impact over the long run." — **Blake Moret**, CEO, Rockwell Automation

"Kelly and Jeff have played a significant role in my leadership development and have been terrific partners in helping me find the strongest executive talent over the years. This is a must read for senior leaders looking to advance their career." — **Judson Althoff**, CEO, Commercial, Microsoft

"Kelly and Jeff are the best in the industry! They've developed an amazing roadmap for senior executives navigating their next career challenge. This book delivers the clarity, strategy, and confidence needed to succeed in today's challenging environment." — **Ali Ghodsi**, Co-Founder and CEO, Databricks

"Jeff and Kelly articulate something every great leader eventually realizes. Opportunities do not always go to the most accomplished or most deserving, but to those who want it the most." — **Josh Kushner**, Founder and Managing Partner, Thrive Capital

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[linkedin.com/in/jeffsanderson2](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jeffsanderson2)



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For press inquiries, please contact

Erin Birnbaum at erin@smithpublicity.com
Dan Rovzar at dan.rovzar@smithpublicity.com