Partner Transition Program

The Path to a Successful Portfolio Career for Experienced Partners

2025

Schwarz & Pfeiffer Executive Advisory Partners GmbH
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THE IDEA

Stepping away from an active partner role does not signal the end of a career – but the beginning of a new entrepreneurial chapter, rich with opportunity.
In a world where experience, foresight, and integrity are more valuable than ever, the portfolio career offers seasoned professionals a powerful platform to continue making an impact – beyond traditional executive roles.

With this program, we aim to support experienced partners in shaping this transition intentionally, strategically, and with a clear sense of purpose.

It is about orientation, fresh perspectives – and the conviction that this third career phase can be just as meaningful and influential as the ones before.

We invite you to walk this path with us.

Schwarz & Pfeiffer Executive Advisory Partners

WHY THIS PROGRAM?

Many experienced partners in professional services firms reach a point in their careers where their active involvement with the firm ends – whether due to retirement, voluntary retirement, or structural changes. This transition often does not mark the end of their professional journey, but rather the beginning of a new chapter: a portfolio career. However, leaving the familiar role of partner is often fraught with uncertainty – personal, emotional, and strategic. Without focused preparation, there is a risk that huge potential will remain untapped or that the transition will be ineffective.

WHY NOW?

Demographic change is affecting professional services firms like many other firms. A growing number of partners will face a step in the coming years that is often not clearly defined but, if well-designed, can represent a real career advancement. At the same time, expectations of what constitutes a "dignified exit" are changing: It's no longer just about retirement, but about reorientation, impact, and meaningful change. Now is the moment to approach this transition in a structured manner – proactively, strategically, and with a view to creating mutual benefit.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Experienced partners leaving law firms, management consultancies, accountancies, or similar professional services firms – starting approximately two years before their actual departure.

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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS?

- **Clarity:** Participants reflect on their personal goals, values, and competencies and develop a realistic, motivating vision of their next professional phase.
- **Strategy:** They develop concrete steps for the transition – from governance roles to consulting, mentoring, higher education, and impact initiatives.
- **Network & Inspiration:** In-depth conversations with like-minded individuals lead to new perspectives, impulses, and opportunities for collaboration to emerge.
- **Confidence:** Participants gain confidence and the power to shape a self-determined transition – both emotionally and practically.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR THE FIRMS?

- **Knowledge transfer:** A more structured exit allows to secure valuable experience and established client relationships and to pass them on to future generations.
- **Reputation & employer branding:** Firms that actively support their senior partners during the transition demonstrate responsibility and foresight – both internally and externally.
- **Succession/pyramid management:** Clearly communicated transitions create space for the development of new leaders and ensure continuity.
- **Long-term commitment:** Former partners remain connected to the firm as valuable multipliers, advisors, or mentors.

This program is a strategic repositioning for a fulfilling, meaningful, and entrepreneurial third career phase. It combines personal development with benefits for the organization – thus creating real added value for both sides.

HOW IS THE PROGRAM STRUCTURED?

The program consists of four components:

- Individual intake call
- Assessing personal communication and interaction preferences
- 5 x 1-day workshops (in-person in Frankfurt)
- Individual 1:1 executive coaching to tailor the use of the program content

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE WORKSHOPS?

In each of the workshops, we delve deeply into the possible roles that are typically part of a portfolio career: on supervisory/advisory boards, as investor/business angel, in the not-for-profit sector, in academia, in executive coaching.

With experienced seniors currently working in these roles, we look behind the facade of the commonly available success stories. We want to enable all participants to realistically assess whether and, if so, how this role might fit into their own portfolio of activities, and what preparation for it might look like.

ADVISORY BOARD / NED ROLES

Crowning one's career with one or more mandates on the supervisory or advisory board of renowned companies – a prospect that appeals to many departing PSF partners. In addition to recognition and appreciation, the financial rewards of roles on these boards are also attractive. We provide insights into the requirements and paths to interesting mandates and highlight individual opportunities for the next step in one's career – together with people who have already successfully embarked on this path.

INVESTOR / BUSINESS ANGEL

Successful partners in a professional services firm are usually characterized by combining comprehensive expertise with entrepreneurial flair. So, what could be more natural than becoming a business angel and investor? It's a great opportunity to pass on your own experiences to the next generation of entrepreneurs and hopefully also generate a financial return. Experienced business angels, investors, and successful founders provide insights.

NOT FOR PROFIT

Many partners in a professional services firm are already active in the not-for-profit sector as part of their "regular professional" networking. In addition to building and maintaining interesting contacts, their motivation is usually to "give something back." There are many opportunities to contribute to shaping social impact or social entrepreneurial environments. We explore the exciting questions of how activities in this sector can become an essential component of one's own employment and the fulfilment that this can bring.

ACADEMIA

As a partner in a PSF, you learn about new topics and industries at an incredible pace and deepen this knowledge with clients and in internal practice groups, both locally and internationally. The transfer of knowledge and expertise at the highest level in a didactically appealing format is a key feature of the role. The combination of challenging theoretical training with relevant practical knowledge is an ideal combination for students of all disciplines. Working with committed young students, receiving feedback on topics of practical relevance, and motivating young people to gain as much practical knowledge as possible, thus making sense of theory, is a great incentive to pursue a career in academia.

EXECUTIVE COACHING

Most PSF partners have worked as internal coaches. This role is often described as exciting and fulfilling, as the result is seeing other people become more successful and realize their potential. Many PSF partners also act as a kind of executive coach externally – in the way they shape their relationships with their key clients. In this module, we demonstrate what it takes to work as a professional executive coach and how to successfully position yourself.

WHO DESIGNS & DELIVERS THE PROGRAM?

Carsten Rumberg

Partner @ Eversheds Sutherland, Partner @ Pinsent Masons; Of Counsel GSK Stockmann, Executive Coach

Prof. Dr. Gunther Schwarz

Senior Partner @ BCG, Bain & Company, Senior Partner/MD @ Schwarz & Pfeiffer, Professor an der Leuphana

Heiko Franken

Partner @ BCG, Senior Coach, Investor/Business Angel

Rolf Pfeiffer

Arthur D. Little, Accenture, Senior Coach CCL, Senior Partner/MD @ Leadership Choices and Schwarz & Pfeiffer, Chair Common Purpose Deutschland, Vice-Chair BCCG Foundation

WHERE AND WHEN?

S&P Executive Advisory Partners in Frankfurt, Bockenheimer Anlage 46 (directly opposite the Alte Oper)

Full-day workshops (9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.) on

- November 28, 2025
- January 23, 2026
- March 20, 2026
- May 8, 2026
- June 19, 2026

Each with an informal get-together starting at 7:00 p.m. the evening before

NEXT STEPS & CONTACTS

By email to welcome@sp-eap.com
Or give us a call: +49 69 9432 9108
We will then arrange a personal appointment to answer your questions.

Get in Touch

www.sp-eap.com