

Engage to Empower

“Empowerment isn't defined by the things you control but by your ability to inspire others.”
- Christopher Frederick founder Chris Hingle

We've made it this far. After three years marked by fear, hesitation and consistently bad news, today's real estate professionals have adapted to meet the needs of a changed market. Employers, facing uncertain regulatory conditions and a dearth of confidence, remain reluctant to hire, leaving employees and executives alike working harder than ever to help their firms perform. The upshot is that the experience of the last few years is empowering. The knowledge, perseverance and even humility earned through the economic downturn are, in fact, assets for aspiring executives and ambitious employees.

New skills developed on the fly as the industry weathered its greatest storm in decades make employees more valuable than ever. Now is the time to take stock of those new assets and feel empowered to take risks in your career. For example, an associate of mine recently turned around an ailing department, performing beyond expectations despite dismal business conditions. Yet he was unhappy because higher-ranking executives, feeling stressed by economic demands, continued to pressure him despite a stellar performance. Instead of staying unhappy and acquiescing for fear of being fired, he decided to confront his boss. This bold move empowered both of them: The higher-ranking executive by gaining valuable insight into how the department was able to exceed its goals, and my associate by making the case for more autonomy while earning further respect from his boss by addressing him honestly.

Likewise, job seekers can benefit by confronting problems and challenges rather than hiding behind the comfortable status quo. In my 20-plus years of executive recruitment, I've found that self-knowledge is one of the most empowering tools available to aspiring applicants. That's why I recently began offering customized [DiSC self-assessment profiles](#) from a company trusted by hundreds of large firms. Rather than denying weaknesses or assuming strengths, those who take this assessment give themselves – and even potential employers – an objective inventory of the strengths and traits that make them perfect for a given position.

Now is also the time for successful executives to step outside their comfort zones. Even motivated people can get stuck in stale, defensive mindsets following a recession. With a workforce empowered by its do-or-die efforts in recent years, we shouldn't be afraid to take risks. Take stock in what you've learned and sacrificed in recent years, then empower yourself to act. Press for that promotion. Explore

those daydreams of jumping ship or striking out on your own. Better yet, let your confidence empower others as well. Consider volunteering to help those who are less fortunate, or simply lend a hand to a struggling co-worker.

One has to play to win, and the time for standing on the sidelines waiting for better times is over.

At Christopher Frederick, we've spent more than two decades finding the perfect candidates for our clients' top positions. To learn more about how we can empower your firm in its next executive search, contact us at chingle@cfrederick.com, 800-EXU-FIRM or visit our website at www.cfrederick.com.