



Xavier Delhaise
Interim Transformation
Director

Overview of Corporate Career

Over the last twenty years, I have alternated increasingly large transformation roles for Blue Chip companies with stints in management consulting, working predominantly over the last few years with PE portfolio companies.

Interim Assignments Completed

- Shaping transformation capabilities
- Sales effectiveness transformation
- Performance improvement transformation
- Right-sizing of operation
- Growth strategy

Core Specialisms and USPs

Transforming businesses as part of the management team. I can support clients in the diagnostic of what is not right, the recommendation of how it should be addressed, and the implementation effort to get there. I often deal with executives who are drawn into activities below their pay grade, and my leading the way to address change gives them back time to run their organisation.

The Interim Statement

March 2019

1. Why did you become an Interim Manager?

There is a real weakness across many sectors when it comes to implementing and delivering change. With my combined experience in management consulting and in delivering large transformation programs, it seemed a natural move for me to start engaging businesses on this issue.

2. How did you secure your first assignment?

I was approached by a friend having trouble with the size and scope of the project he worked on as a freelance, and I helped him to get enough bandwidth for this very demanding assignment.

3. How do you go about getting assignments?

There are many channels to market. Firstly, there are a few headhunting firms doing an outstanding job at defining the high-end of the Interim market, and it is worth being on their radar. Then, developing relationships with PE funds can also be rewarding. More generally, networking is a source of leads that is invaluable.

4. What attracts you to a particular assignment?

I am a firm believer that sector knowledge can contribute to developing eye blinders, so approaching a new sector will always tempt me. There are also other factors that matter to me. Can I make a difference? Do I have a sense that I will be able to work well with the management team? What will my exit point look like?

5. Which assignment are you most proud of?

It is a transformation role to improve the sales effectiveness of a B2B organisation. There was room for improvement in their sales activities, but the elephant in the room was the culture of fear and blame that the CEO had let creep in. I voiced it to the management team, and it completely changed the dynamics of the transformation.

6. Has an assignment ever 'gone wrong'? Why?

I worked with another service company to boost their sales effectiveness, and the results went beyond their wildest projections. As the service required an installed base of equipment, the investors decided at some point to clip the wings of the sales force, downsizing it and leading to the resignation of some key members of the management team.

Education & Qualifications

Mechanical Engineering degree from UCL in Belgium, and a MBA from Darden in Virginia.

7. What advice would you give to a first time Interim Manager?

Be prepared to define your space and your value contribution. A trap of being an Interim Manager is the feast and famine syndrome. To avoid it, be prepared to multi-task and network while on an assignment.

8. Do you ever feel you should go back to a permanent / corporate job?

Not really. I tend to see life as a sequence of projects, with a starting and an end point. Through these lenses, the contractual set-up does not matter much. Some might think that there is a deeper sense of affiliation with an employer when you are permanent staff, but I believe it has more to do with your work ethics.

9. What is the best thing about being an Interim Manager

The total freedom with which you can reset your professional challenges. There is also a need to learn very fast how a new set of stakeholders think, process information and act upon it.

To understand more about the benefits hiring an Interim Manager can bring to your organisation, please contact Steve Rutherford on +44(0) 20 7569 9540 or steve.rutherford@miles-partnership.com

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