

# Inspiring Women

## Episode 69: Lisa Rangel

Laurie McGraw:

Welcome to Inspiring Women with Laurie McGraw. I am your host, Laurie McGraw. I have spent the past 30 years in leadership and over the years I've come to learn one thing: women need women and not just any women, but inspiring women. Tune in every week to hear from women at the pinnacle of their careers and from others who are just starting out. Episodes can be found at [inspiringwomen.show](http://inspiringwomen.show) or subscribe on your favorite podcast app. Thanks for listening. And I hope you will be inspired.

I'm Laurie McGraw and you're listening to Inspiring Women. As we kick off the new year, there is so much talk about the great resignation, probably the great reevaluation, or maybe the great reset. And so who better to speak with than today than Lisa Rangel. Lisa is 20 years experience of executive coaching, placement and her own company, Chameleon Resumes, which she founded over a dozen years ago to help executives learn how to better present themselves to get their next great career placement faster, better, and in just an exceptional way. And Lisa I'm so pleased to be talking to you today.

Lisa Rangel:

Thank you so much for having me on the show. Very grateful.

Laurie McGraw:

Well, Lisa let's just get started. So, I always start Inspiring Women. You've been 20 years in this business of helping professionals find their next place, whether it's through coaching or placement or just helping them find a way to present themselves. But why don't you start with just telling us what you do day-to-day? What's Chameleon Resumes all about?

Lisa Rangel:

We are an executive resume writing and job landing consulting firm. Everyone on my team has prior either corporate or search firm recruiting experience. So what we do is we reverse engineer our first hand experience with the recruiting process and we write our documents for our clients and do our job landing tactic training with clients, showing them exactly what to do with the marketing documents that we create for them. So they're not waiting for recruiters to call. They're not waiting for the ideal job posting to appear. We're showing them how to go out, find and approach target individuals based on what they want in their next career.

Laurie McGraw:

So Lisa, in doing that, I want to talk about that because it's always interesting in terms of here are very experienced people and they don't necessarily have the best approach tactic skills for how to present themselves. But before we even go into that, how did this become your professional choice? How did you become a leader at it and it takes quite a bit of seniority I think, to actually

be working with executives who is, I believe is your primary audience. So maybe just give us the little bit of history in terms of how you got there.

Lisa Rangel:

Absolutely. I was a search firm recruiter in primarily the accounting and finance space, but as I got promoted in the recruiting industry that I was a part of for 13 years, I started overseeing different disciplines of recruiting, both on the contract side, as well as the executive placement side. And so I came to opening Chameleon in 2009, with 13 years of prior executive recruiting and contract placement experience. And I see the value in having that firsthand expertise in doing this for clients directly. And to be clear, we're not placing individuals because only about 10 to 15% of hires happen through third party recruiters or search firm recruiters as most people come to know them as. It's 60 to 65% of hires that happen through essentially networking: employee referrals, social media connections, personal contacts, and not just the first degree, but second, third, fourth degree connections.

And it's really showing people how to essentially mine their own database using internet research, LinkedIn, other sources, for them to find their own opportunities that aren't necessarily posted sometimes. And sometimes they are. And it's just how to inch yourself forward as the person to be interviewed and then ultimately be viewed as the person to be hired.

Laurie McGraw:

So before you were an executive yourself, you were working with executives. Lisa, what surprises you? I mean, why if somebody is a very senior professional, why aren't they all ... Why do they need your services?

Lisa Rangel:

What we find over and over again is executives, senior level professionals, people who have been in doing what they do for anywhere from 20, 25, 30 years, is they are very good at what they do. So they've been sought after, recruited, promoted throughout their career. And while they did do some personal marketing typically in some capacity or they have a resume that they've updated since maybe they got their MBA or even some, if they don't have an MBA, even just the resume that they got out of the career center 20 years ago. And they just kind of update that, but they're typically find themselves in situations up until they get to us where their reputation preceded them. So the need for maybe robust marketing materials or a very direct approach in doing a job search wasn't needed as much, because like I said, they were sought after, they were recruited, they were promoted.

But those are at the levels, staff and mid-level management levels, where there are more positions available just simply, if you look at the hierarchy of an org chart, there's just more staff and more middle management positions available compared to say the C level or the executive level. And when they start to position themselves to be in that level or they're at that level and now want to make another move and stay in that level, I think they don't realize they may be in situations where their reputation isn't proceeding them. And so they actually need to have market documents that market themselves. And they also haven't had to do an active search, a proactive search where they are initiating the search versus just reacting to what's coming to them. And it's at the time where there's the fewest positions at the top level. I mean, that's just economic.

So I think these things all happen at the same time. I think once you're over 40, 45 years old and you've been doing what you do for a while, I think most of us have had this experience sometimes where you don't, you feel like you've arrived and people should be coming to you just at the point where maybe now the succession plan, you're not a part of it, or there's an M&A move and you're not in the big part of the predominant company doing the M&A move, or just something isn't, you don't like your boss anymore, and you're not going to elevate in that company any further, when you start to have to do the search yourself, right at a point where you feel like maybe you've arrived and people should be coming to you, it can be a little bit of an ego blow. And I think that's why people then come to needing us.

Laurie McGraw:

Yeah. And so I want to actually twist it a little bit or turn it a little bit to women in particular, because I think that so many of the women that I talk to or mentor, there is this history of success. It's almost like not necessarily planning your career ascent, but there's falling into the next thing. And then all of the sudden things slow, slow down and there's sort of, what do I do? And then it gets into the self negative cycle of, oh gee whiz, I'm not all that I thought I was. So that's what, just things that I have seen in just many years of speaking to women, mentoring, et cetera. What do you see? Do you see those differences between men and in women specifically?

Lisa Rangel:

You know, I see differences in men and women, but I also see some of those scenarios that typically get labeled as being seen with women executives, I see those happen with men. And then I see what happens or what gets labeled as happening with men, sometimes obviously happen in women. So some abide by the stereotypes, some don't, and that's, I think, human nature. Not everybody fits to a stereotype, but what I find sometimes with women though, and it's just, also speaking for myself is, I think we tend to feel like we have to fit most of the criteria before we apply, or before we think we're worthy. And men typically take more of a risk.

I mean, here's a little bit more of an example: a lot of times when we present a first draft of a resume to a female executive, they sometimes are a little concerned if we're overreaching with things or if it's too powerful. And when we actually drill down in each bullet and say, "This is a fact you gave us, this is something you actually did and accomplish, how do you want me to dial it back if this is what you did?" When we get sometimes into the granularity of the editing and say "Okay, we can't dial this back. This is what you did." And then they're like, "Oh yeah, okay." So we get them to own it. But whereas a lot of times with men, if we present something, they'll be like, oh my God, that looks amazing. And they're not concerned about it looking like it's too much.

And I've had that both ways, or an opposite way with men and women as well. But it is a majority when there is any resistance sometimes to a first draft, it's usually an uncomfortability and that uncomfortability typically sits more with women than with men.

Laurie McGraw:

And I think that also falls into the camp of, "I don't know how I can be confident saying that. I don't know if that is the authentic me." So I think that is a well studied phenomenon in terms of I forget what the exact statistics are, but women tend to want to fit 90 or plus percent of the criteria to apply for something, men it's more in the 60, 65% range. So given that that is what is, how do

you advise women to, I don't know, get over it or lean into it. I mean, that is obviously something that perhaps holds women back from pursuing things. And what I'm hearing you say, it's not necessary to do that. So how do people get over it? How do women in particular, get over those issues?

Lisa Rangel:

It's definitely a complicated answer. And at risk it's seeming oversimplified, typically women have more on their plates at home in addition to what they're doing in their senior level job. So I think there's a lot of work that we need to do to say what we're doing is acceptable, what we're doing is enough, and then promote what we're doing. I think the key is not to think we have to get this some next level certificate or some next level achievement in order to then think we're worthy to start marketing ourselves in some way, or promoting ourselves in some way or standing up for ourselves in some way. I think the key is just to realize we have enough and we've done enough and we don't need to do any more. And the key is just to start marketing and by marketing, the key is to stick with the facts.

If it's factual, it's not bragging in my opinion. And don't use superlatives, don't use subjective terms. Facts are facts. And if you're the one who led it, managed it, did it, then just own it and say it as very matter-of-factly, in the right context as is possible. And just let it roll and be strategic about it too in many cases. Whether it's speaking to specific people, seeking those meetings out, don't wait for people to come to you. I think there's many ways of being strategic about it and simply just starting and not waiting for some threshold to take place in order to feel worthy. I think that's really the key.

Laurie McGraw:

So what are some of those ways? Again, just some examples I've used with women is to, in today's Zoom world, practice your introduction. When you're in a meeting, we all have to introduce ourselves at times and find a way to pack a lot into the 30 seconds, who am I? And it's sort of interesting to me how women, at least ones that I work with, tend to introduce themselves, which I think is underselling exactly who they are or how they might want to show up or aspire for the next things. What are the sort of practical examples of advice that you give to people?

Speaker 4:

I think the new elevator pitch isn't in an elevator, like you just mentioned, it's on the Zoom intro. So I think that is definitely one great suggestion. Another great suggestion, I think, is keeping your LinkedIn profile updated, because as you go into meetings, as you, whether it's vendor, internal people, clients, whoever it is that you might be meeting with, they're going to look you up on LinkedIn. And if you're actively looking for a job and you're worried about coming across like you're looking for a job, then write your profile in a way that showcases your wins to promote your company. Be the type of profile that competitors are going to look at and say, "You know what? I want her working for us, to promote us that way. That's pretty cool." So I think if you just look the leadership part, it's in and of itself, sets a tone with people when you chat with them.

I would also encourage someone to set up a certain amount of one-on-one meetings each week with people that you do projects with, even if it's 15 minutes, a catch up of some kind. If the meeting isn't feasible, then a summary email that's very short. The key is to stay visible in a

factual, outlining the progress, manner. That all has to be substituted for what would happen maybe walking by somebody's office or being part of an in person conference if that happened more regularly prior to the pandemic. So it needs to be more deliberate and intentional in this remote world. And it may feel uncomfortable for some people, but I think people have to remember others are doing it. And so you may be left out by not doing it. And so by trying it and starting small and building your comfort level and then doing it more regularly each week, each month, I think that's the key, is to keep your reputation nurtured, keep your network nurtured and be factual in your presentations.

Laurie McGraw:

Well I also think that networking, you mentioned that 60 to 65% of whatever the next ladder up position is, is through network. And I think that people often misconstrue networking as being something that you do only if you are looking for a next position. I don't think that's true. And I think it's also harder to network again in this some of us back, some of us not back, kind of environment. And it also, just in talking to lots of women, networking seems to be a harder thing to do generally speaking. So beyond the one-on-one meetings with colleagues that you're working with, what do you think about networks? How do you advise people to do networking and how can networking be done in a professional way that isn't just in a job seeking way?

Lisa Rangel:

Some things that I use LinkedIn for personally, and we've advised clients to do, and we see work, and it may seem random, but honestly it works and not a lot of people are doing it. Any business books that you're reading, because honestly everybody's writing a book nowadays, if any business book that you read, reach out to the author, make a comment and indicate what you enjoyed and see if they would have a 15 minute conversation, or if you can invite them to a group meeting that you're having. And then you can also post a about it on LinkedIn, invite other people to read the book and get together and talk about it. But authors want to be noticed. So that's typically a reply you're going to get back in many cases. So that's one thing to try.

Do that same idea if you see conferences being held, even if you can't attend, you can look at the speaker list. If any of the presentations are videoed, watch it, make a comment, reach out to the person directly and ask to set up a chat or even just answer some questions via email. People are more likely to sometimes do that if they can't actually make a time to chat. And again, share it, post it, invite other people into that conversation and just see where it goes. I would look for individuals within your company that are doing interesting work, great work, and reach out to them. Whenever it might be the comment that's appropriate based on the work, based on a milestone they've had, or whatever the case may be. And if a meeting's in order, great, if not even just having a dialogue, you've made a connection.

And I would look for people on LinkedIn. You can use the search feature to find people that can be of interest, whether it's certain position titles of certain companies, whether it's professors at universities and business schools that can maybe connect you with other people. I mean, I would just look for what you're interested in or interested in discussing and then who would be the individuals that are purveying that information and then try to reach out and have conversations and see where they go.

Laurie McGraw:

I think that's such great advice. So practical, so relatable. I mean, that's how we met Lisa. You just reached out to me, we had a great conversation. I really enjoyed it and we're talking here today. But I want to move to something else. And so this is the big discussion of 2022: the great resignation, great revaluation, the great reset. So what are you seeing in terms of all the people that you're talking to is there many more people reaching out to you? What is the conversation and how do you look at the dynamics in the workforce today?

Lisa Rangel:

I think the great resignation at the executive level, it isn't as impactful as say maybe at the mid-level or the staff level. I think executives and senior level people have been making quality of life type of job changes well before the pandemic. Not to say that the pandemic hasn't affected the senior level or executive set, it absolutely has, but the option of saying I want to have a more meaningful job, I want to be home with my family more, I want certain perks so I can have flexibility, we've been coaching clients on that type of change since I've started in this business.

So I would say that the great resignation hasn't really been a reason or a new reason for the executive set, but I think now that the middle management and staff level employees now see that as an option. And that's what's really making the labor force very tumultuous right now for employers in terms of finding the right talent, because now these other levels of individuals see that they can quit because of family reasons, health reasons, quality of life reasons. And I think that was never really a mentally available option to other positions other than the executive set. So for the executives, I would still say don't get caught up in what the headlines are reading, and this goes for everybody, but because it really isn't pertaining to the executive set, I would say, really look at what you want to make the change for. And then again, where does that exist? And then come up with a plan to make that change happen in the locations, in the employers that are going to be able to facilitate the change that you want.

Laurie McGraw:

So the people that you are working with, it might not be infect affecting them personally, but in terms of ... They are the leaders of the people who are going through this. So how are you advising them to be better employers, to be more engaging leaders for the team members that they're ... Because keeping people in place ...

Lisa Rangel:

It's everything.

Laurie McGraw:

And focused is ... Yes, it's everything to achieving whatever big, big goals organizations have.

Lisa Rangel:

The executives and senior leaders that are having success with their staff are the ones that seem to be most compassionate and really embrace humanity for what it is. People have different lives at home: who's caring for children? Who is single and might be suffering from isolation more than the next person? Who's caring for elderly parents regularly and working the nine-to-five, Monday through Friday, doesn't work as well when they have to do medications or doctor's appointments for their elderly parents. There's just so many different family situations at home.

And the pandemic has really just shined a massive light on all that, that I think if leaders are still trying to make sure everybody fits into this Monday through Friday nine-to-five model, they're essentially excluding people.

It is more naturally inclusive to be flexible within the confines of which a business can be flexible and [inaudible 00:22:21] and really trying to be creative in exploring that so the business doesn't suffer. You can't do things without the business suffering obviously, but at the same time, there's typically more options than we've given some attention to in the past. And I think those that are being successful are now giving attention to those options. Right.

Laurie McGraw:

Right and I think those are often characteristics of women leaders who can move into that area of compassion in a way that perhaps for it may be easier for many. So that's again, just great, great advice. You know, I couldn't be talking to you Lisa, without asking you the question that is probably the most often question that I get from younger women who are starting out in their career, how do I negotiate for a better compensation package? How do I know my worth and ask for it? How do you advise people there?

Lisa Rangel:

I would say arm yourself with research, salary research in different geographic areas, based on the experience you bring to the table and ask. Just always ask. Even if you ask and get turned down, they still know you and see you as somebody who will ask, because you want to set the tone right from the beginning, that you will be somebody who will ask. And I think that's the key. And then a secondary piece of advice is just keep your marketing, external marketing materials, ready. Because when you look like you're comfortable in your job, your employer will not necessarily work as hard to keep you.

And you don't always want to be looking and it's not about constantly, you don't want the reputation of constantly looking or being so obvious about looking. But if you look like you can be recruited away, they will work hard at keeping you happy. If you look comfortable and blindly loyal, they just instinctively, if resources are short or attention spans are short by management, they're going to focus, I hate to say the squeaky wheel thing, but there is some value to it. And the key is to do it tastefully and diplomatically and not look like a commodity. And then they will work hard to keep you.

Laurie McGraw:

Lisa, I think there's just those comments. You know, what I like about them is they speak to both the internal emotions that many women feel in terms of comfort or discomfort with asking for things. But then also recognizing the real issues from the employer side, which is obvious given that you work with so many different executives. This has been such a great, Inspiring Women conversation Lisa. Before we close out, any last words of wisdom from the 20 years of giving advice, what's the best advice you can leave other aspiring women?

Lisa Rangel:

Do what you can proactively to keep your brands current, because it will prevent you from feeling stuck. And the key is to always know that there's somewhere else. If for any reason you do find yourself somewhere where the advancement isn't happening anymore, it does happen to

everyone at some point in their career. It's not indicative of your personal worth. The key is just to know you have value. And then it's just a matter of accepting the fact you may have to find it somewhere else and that's okay. But it's human. Literally everything I think most people feel, all us have felt at some point or another in our careers and we're not alone. And, and the key is to then ask for help so we can share that experience and help people move on to the place where they're appreciated.

Laurie McGraw:

Terrific. Well, Lisa, I so appreciate this conversation. This has been an Inspiring Women episode with Lisa Rangel, and Lisa, thank you so much.

Lisa Rangel:

Thank you so much. I appreciate being here very much.

Laurie McGraw:

This has been an episode of Inspiring Women with Laurie McGraw. Please subscribe, rate, and review. We are produced by Kate Kruse at Executive Podcast Solutions. More episodes can be found on [inspiringwomen.show](http://inspiringwomen.show). I am Laurie McGraw and thank you for listening.