

A black and white photograph of a woman with long hair and glasses, wearing a striped button-down shirt. She is sitting at a desk, looking down at a laptop. There are some papers and a smartphone on the desk next to her. The background is a plain wall with a window on the left.

Beyond the 9to5:

WOMEN & THE FUTURE OF (POST-PANDEMIC) WORK

One of Evolve’s core values is embracing change. As a professional development company for women in midlife who are contemplating a career transition, we think about change as a creator of new opportunities. With the current global health crisis, the state of our economic and social lives has gone through a dramatic upheaval. How do we set ourselves up for our next career move when there is so much uncertainty? How can we think about the flip-side of this disruption? Opportunity, perhaps? One of the most promising ways is to leverage partnerships with leading organizations that understand the real-life experiences of women in the workforce.

Before the pandemic outbreak, Evolve (www.evolve.work) and the Lioness group—the Women’s Affinity

Group of minority-owned human resources solutions and advisory firm Pride Global (www.prideglobal.com)—were planning an in-person event on the future of women and work. The event’s focus was on looking beyond the 9-to-5 to more remote, flexible, project-based, contract, and contingent work. These conversations are even more relevant now as we all move to a remote, virtual-based work culture and think about the economic struggles of small businesses, increasing unemployment, and furloughed workers.

What do these changes mean for women’s careers? What aspects of today’s work culture do we want to bring into the future? What industries and roles are poised to respond to the emerging new normal? Will flexible, contingent work be

available post pandemic as increasing numbers of women explore shifting to more flexible roles?

Evolve had the pleasure of interviewing our colleagues, the leaders of Pride Global, and the Lioness group to hear current thinking on these questions and more. Let’s “try on” the future of work together!

—Judy Schoenberg and Linda Lautenberg, Co-Founders, Evolve

INTERVIEW WITH KATE GOSS, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PRIDEONE

Tell us about Pride Global’s mission and core business as a global staffing and advisory firm. What makes your company unique?

Pride Global has evolved so much



over the years as the world of staffing has changed, but what has stayed constant is our commitment to bringing value to our customers and forming long term relationships based on trust.

As technology has advanced, there have been ways for companies to bring automation to many processes, but you can never automate the process of convincing a human to take a chance on a new job or a new business partner.

Technology is fantastic at reducing repetitive tasks and reducing human error, and we embrace it for those reasons. But what makes us unique is that we recognize that in the world of staffing and advisory, every relationship should be a mutually beneficial relationship. So with that, every stakeholder—whether a client, a candidate, or a supplier—is critical to our success and we treat them accordingly. A candidate today can be

a client tomorrow, and our growth is a testament to the trust and respect we have built in the market.

Pride Global has many lines of business. What has been the biggest challenge it's faced during the pandemic? How are you responding? Talk about how you've been supporting small businesses as well as individuals.

As a relationship business, it's been challenging to transition to all remote work. Fortunately, we have a great operations team and they were preparing for this lockdown for weeks prior to having to actually execute. Even India—which traditionally has not been conducive to work from home—was prepared for the transition which was critical to us since many of our back office functions are executed by our team there.



Remember, It's OKAY to take a mental breather.

"Career transition is often a scary thing, especially when it's not necessarily by choice and it happens in the middle of a pandemic. Something important to keep in mind is you're not alone. Currently in the US, there are 26.5 million unemployed. Whether you were furloughed, are out of work entirely, or are seeking career change voluntarily, this momentary pause from the day-to-day will likely prove to be beneficial. You have time to put yourself first. Whether that be focusing on your mental health and taking time to navigate the feelings and emotions that stem from a furlough or job loss, or focusing on taking your career in a new direction by building skills through online courses and independent studies or researching different career paths available to you. Taking the time to explore your needs from a mental wellness perspective, as well as career satisfaction, will put you in a strong position to take on whatever new opportunity you seize when that time comes."

—Taylor Biedrzycki | Program Manager, PrideOne
Lioness "Wellness" Committee



Our CEO has consistently emphasized the need for everyone to extend extra effort to reach out to our colleagues, our clients, and our contingent workers to make sure everyone is doing OKAY and feeling connected during this time. Our Advisory group also has done a tremendous job swinging into action to assist our small business clients during this time. As soon as the CARES Act passed, they were actively assisting clients through the process of applying for loans and other benefits available under the new laws.

We plan to continue assisting them in meeting the criteria for as much financial assistance, including loan forgiveness, that they are eligible for.

“Persistence... is your best ally.”

How have your company’s values helped you lead during this crisis?

We have an internal pneumonic to distill our culture down to its essence, which is AIKIDO. The A in AIKIDO is Adaptability, and certainly it was helpful to have that as one of our core values when everyone’s lives changed! We expect all our colleagues to be adaptable as business circumstances change, and we had people that had to pivot to take on different responsibilities. For example, professional recruitment needs decreased but healthcare recruitment suddenly became extremely busy, so we had some team members shift their specialty.

Other aspects of AIKIDO are Investment in Others and Outlook. The expectation that everyone will be very active in reaching out to our network, making sure our clients and colleagues are OK, and staying positive is built into our company’s DNA and comes naturally to us.

We’ve enjoyed getting to know the Lioness group—the Women’s Affinity group at Pride Global. Can you tell us more about its goals and how you think it can support women during this time at both Pride and beyond?

The goal of the Lioness group at Pride Global is to

Re-entering the Job Force From a Mom's Perspective

"Once you become a mother, your life completely changes. Your expectations shift and you begin to live your life through your children—it's now all about them. It's definitely a challenge to try and find yourself again. You may forget what your interests lie, or what your original talents and hobbies were. And to add insult to injury... you become your biggest critic. Now's your chance to take a moment and reflect back on what it is you want to do—even if that means going way back to what you wanted to do when you were in high school or college. Think about the last job you had before you had a baby. You might be thinking: "How can you avoid that gap in your resume?" If only adding changing diapers to your resumes was that easy. Luckily now in 2020, it's proven to be okay when explaining that time off on your resume was there so you could raise a family. Be confident in your prior experience. Mention your accomplishments, your goals, and your interests to your interviewer, recruiter, or hiring manager. Also, remember that there are many options out there that can help you find the perfect role. As the world evolves, so does society, technology, and social networks. There are people like us at Pride that live to assist with making you visible. Now's the time to put yourself out there so you can be seen."

—Khadija Robinson | Associate Scheduler, PRIDE HEALTH
Lioness "Motherhood @ Pride" Committee



identify opportunities and obstacles that disproportionately affect women within and outside of Pride, and work to capitalize on the opportunities and mitigate the obstacles. This might take the form of very concrete policy changes. For example, through the advocacy of the Lioness group, our firm now offers 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, which is extremely generous for our industry. Or, it might take a more subtle form of helping women form connections and gain experience in leading meetings, developing a project plan, having difficult conversations with professional associates, or other skills which will help them gain visibility within the firm and marketable skills beyond Pride. We are fairly new, but we hope to extend our mission outside of our firm to organizations like Evolve so we can build up women's personal and professional lives within the larger community.

During this stressful time, I'm finding that the structure of the Lioness group is helping us stay connected and engaged outside of our heads-down, day-to-day responsibilities. It's been very valuable for myself personally to know there is a group of committed professional women that I get to meet with on a weekly basis and not only make progress against "official" goals, but

also have warm personal relationship with.

We've worked hard and with a clear intention to make Lioness a safe space where we can be real and vulnerable with each other, and I think that's just so valuable right now.

What's the one piece of advice you would give to a woman in mid-career who is thinking about a new career direction right now? Tell us what you think her first step should be.
It's never an easy time to take your career in a different direction, and now that we seem to be heading into a (hopefully short) recession, it's not going to be easier.

As a first step, ask as many people as you can think of for an "informational interview." Friends, former colleagues, college acquaintances, friends of friends... cast a wide net. Make it clear that your only goal is to learn from them. You're not asking for a job at this point. Talk to people in the field you'd like to get into, and talk to people who are successful in completely different areas. Buy them coffee and ask them about their path. Where did they start, and how did they get where they are? What was helpful to them? What is it

like to do the job they have now? Where do they think their industry is going? You'd be surprised how easy it can be to get people to talk about themselves! And only after letting them talk about themselves, you can ask for advice.

I found when I was at a turning point in my career, the help I received came from completely unexpected directions, and the more people you talk to, the better your chances are for figuring out the key to unlocking that next step. Persistence (without being a pest) is your best ally. ♦

But wait... there's more.

We decided to dig deeper and ask some of the additional members of the Lioness group who are leading the employment-charge to see what advice they have for women who might be navigating a new professional life through the modern approach of the virtual-based daily grind.

There is a lot of discussion about the future of work. With so many people working having experienced remotely and flexible work, it seems that companies that can offer contingent or contract work in the future will be attractive to prospective employees. What industries do you project to be suitable for this type of workforce?

"As a Recruiter that sits on the Legal team in Charleston office, I have continued to see movement within the Legal field throughout the last six weeks of the pandemic. That isn't to say we haven't been affected, but for the most part, my team has seen very minimal layoffs, and while hiring is not as heavy, we have continued to make placements both contract and direct-hire.

We have placed contract Attorneys and contract Paralegals that have been able to work remotely, focusing solely on contracts and negotiations. I personally placed a permanent Corporate Counsel with Clinical Supply Chain company who is set to start the first week of May, regardless with where the COVID-19 pandemic stands at that time. And even better news, the few of our contract placements that were laid off have



"[Lioness has] been very valuable for myself personally to know there is a group of committed professional women that I get to meet with on a weekly basis and not only make progress against "official" goals, but also have warm personal relationship with."

—Kate Goss

recently been asked to start again this week along with a potential new role opening up.

In my own personal efforts since recruiting remotely, I have also seen movement over the last six weeks with our strategic accounts, specifically the large tech companies. I have made placements for contract Instructional Designers, Project Managers and Recruiting Coordinators that have either started or will be starting in the next two weeks. My team has also seen movement with marketing roles, public relations roles and recruiting roles with these tech companies.

While hiring volume has not been as high, my team continues to pipeline for areas we have seen heavy movement with in the past and expect to pick up after companies are able to begin hiring again. Some of these areas include legal support roles, recruiting support roles and instructional design roles."

—Ashleigh Meloy | Senior Recruiter, Russell Tobin
Lioness "Community Outreach" Committee

"Being a nimble and flexible industry is becoming more and more popular given the COVID-19 crisis. And I think that there are several industries that will look to leverage a more flexible workforce in the future moving forward after society heads back to its normal routine.

The Technology industry continues to boom, and I think will continue to be a leader in this space, especially in areas they may not have previously allowed to work remotely in the past.

During the COVID-19 crisis, many folks have begun to offer their services online. One industry in particular that has done this well and I think could continue to do so in the future is Coaching and Counseling

(health/wellness, financial, mental health, etc). There is a lot of freedom and flexibility like being able to choose your client load and the hours you'll take appointments, among other aspects.

I also foresee the Creative industry (marketing, design, writers, etc.) being a great space for remote workers, in addition to Healthcare, Customer Service, Education, Administrative Services, and HR."
—Danielle Rangitsch | Senior Senior Associate, Client Engagement, Russell Tobin
Lioness "PR + Marketing" Committee

Look into your crystal ball with us. How do you see virtual project-based work being integrated into our post pandemic lives? Do you think this will be good for women's careers?

"I think this forced working from home situation has pushed many companies outside their comfort zones and has proven beyond expectations what is possible when working remotely. For some, productivity isn't just at a normal level, but is actually higher. In order to allow people to work in this environment, employers had to change processes and make decisions much quicker and less bureaucratically than they have been used to. And I believe this enforced change in approach will have long lasting positive effects.

In many cases, those who have been able to work from home have taken on additional or different duties, broadening their own skillsets, which could be beneficial for future projects. There will be many critical projects required as businesses adapt to the new working world and as the economy starts to slowly pick up again, employers may be hesitant to make long term hiring investments.

Companies experiencing growth may also see the benefit of keeping overheads low by investing less in

corporate office space by having remote employees. I believe this will increase the opportunity for remote projects to be undertaken and increase opportunities, particularly for women seeking some flexibility in their employment engagements.

The Recruiting and Contingent Workforce industries have long been utilizers of a remote and flexible workforce, which has in fact become essential in order to manage the peaks and troughs in hiring cycles. I look forward to this becoming the case in many other areas of business."

—Rosie Johnson | Senior Director – R4People & RPO, Russell Tobin | Pride in Education
Lioness "Community Outreach" Committee

“I think this forced working from home situation has pushed many companies outside their comfort zones and has proven beyond expectations what is possible when working remotely.

"The post pandemic life will be a whole new norm for all of us, especially woman in the workforce. As someone who is working with contingent labor day in and day out throughout this pandemic, we see technology being used in so many new and unique ways. I foresee virtual project-based work being used even more in the future after this pandemic is over, as companies may cut back on real estate costs by having more employees remote and less traveling into the office.

Overall, we have seen success across all industries throughout this



pandemic when all non-essential employees were forced to work virtually from their homes. And if the trend of WFH continues post-pandemic, I feel that woman, specifically mothers, will be the ones to jump on those opportunities first as many would like to be home with their children and families and capable of performing their job duties remotely."

—Jenna Wolchock | Program Manager, PrideOne
Lioness "X, Y, Z Policies" Committee

Many people are taking this time to think about upskilling. Education in technology seems to be a good investment right now. Can you share about the job prospects in the tech sector, skills to learn, and opportunities for women?

"Technology companies continue to crave diversity in their workplace, and on average, women seek more flexible working options that have not always been available. The new world post-crisis will likely create more opportunities to achieve both.

Organizations who previously held traditional views of being in the office 9-5pm are realizing their people can be productive working from home, and are finding new ways to engage their workforce remotely.

The Tech industry, especially Enterprise Software, E-commerce, and Social Media, are still hiring. Across the board, we have seen an increase in hiring for Customer Service/Call Centers, steady demand for Software Engineering, and Digital Marketing/Automation—not at the same hyper growth rate, but we anticipate the Tech industry will bounce back quickly.

If you have never considered contracting previously, now may be the time to try it. We see many companies more inclined to hire on contract to have more flexibility with time frames. We may also see more options for

remote contract work where we haven't in the past.

So, how can you prepare for the opportunity? Create a compelling resume, know how to articulate your experience at an interview (via video), and learn the skills you need to excel within your desired field.

Set aside some regular time each day to focus on learning and improving your skills. We're entering a new employment market where more candidates are competing, so focus on building your knowledge, expertise, and vocabulary to help your profile stand out.

There are a plethora of learning resources available online: coding, math, marketing, and the specific skills they need including Software Engineering, Data Science, and UX Design.

Whether it's refining your interview skills, reading more books or online courses, set a realistic goal for yourself and do a little bit each day. This will help you take advantage of the opportunities you want when they arise.

Not sure what skills to work on? Think about someone you admire in the field you want to be in. What do they have that you don't? Is it an ability to solve math or coding problems? Are they an expert in a statistics or a master in a software? Maybe it's their customer service or their leadership and communication skills. This might help you identify the skills you need to hone to take advantage of that next opportunity."

—Collette Meyers | Director, Strategic Accounts, Russell Tobin
Lioness "Partnerships" Committee

This article has been written in partnership with:

 EVOLVE

 PRIDE GLOBAL

 PRIDE LIONESS

Top Three Tips to Spruce up your Resume

When it comes to optimizing your resume for new opportunities, here are a few recommendations to help get you started:

- ***Tailor your resume*** to highlight skills and experience that apply to the exact role you are looking to obtain. If you haven't held a similar role, focus on those transferrable skills that you've gained over the years.
- ***Get specific.*** Bullets used to describe responsibilities/accomplishments in your previous roles should show your impact and growth where applicable (increase in sales, revenue, changes you implemented and the outcome, etc.)
- ***Be you!*** Resumes should be professional, of course, but they don't all have to look the same. Show your personality to help you stand out among the crowd.

”

Taylor Biedrzycki
Program Manager, PrideOne
Lioness "Wellness" Committee