

# the telos institute

## peak experiences

New Roles, New Goals | March 16, 2017  
James Van Doren

It's an exciting time to be a part of the telos institute. Just ask Wendy Blaszak, telos' new chief consulting officer. She joined the telos institute in March of 2016 as a project manager providing tactical support for the variety of coaching and consulting projects telos engages in. Blaszak also became involved with systematizing some of their practices and processes. In February of this year it was announced she had taken on her current expanded role.

For today she's focused on conscientiously expanding the talent pool of consultants that telos draws from. It's about diversifying.



"We're looking to expand our diversity – in every area. What that means is diversity of talent, of industries, the types of projects that our consultants have worked on. It's diversity of people and diversity of ideas. We want everyone able to bring more to the table, including ourselves."

Blaszak isn't a lone ranger in this charge.

Kathy Lentner has been with telos since January of 2015. Like Blaszak, in February of this year Lentner's promotion from associate director of consulting services to director was announced. While it's a small change in title, it translates to an even higher engagement with telos' talent pool. Lentner is the first and best point of contact for new consultants who look to join telos to support the dynamic



*Wendy Blaszak, Chief Consulting Officer*

and successful clients the firm partners with. Beyond onboarding, she and Blaszak partner in keeping the consultants developed, engaged, and satisfied.

It's why Lentner started the webinar series for the consultants. The webinars introduce them to new topics and provide a virtual space and

forum for the consultants to connect, as well as share feedback and learn from one another.

"We've found that a lot of our consultants, whether they're working in Utah or Columbus or because they're leading projects on their own, they're missing an opportunity to build and be a part of a community. We want to provide that for them," says Lentner "For our consultant partners telos shouldn't be just another phone call, another paycheck. We want to give them more." You can tell she means what she says. This is important to her.

Community building isn't often the focus of a consulting company. Then again, the telos institute isn't your typical consulting company. When telos engages a new consultant, they look for someone with a broader background who has done more than coaching. The team looks to add people who have real business rigor, and who can provide context through real-world experiences. The benefit of

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## the telos institute

A global organizational consulting firm with expertise in leadership, strategy, and change. telos engages senior leaders seeking a committed, collaborative partner to drive strategic value. telos delivers transformative experiences that accelerate growth by equipping leaders to embrace people as their competitive advantage, challenge what is possible, and mobilize discretionary effort.

Consider telos for:

- Leadership coaching
- Business model innovation
- Succession planning
- Critical organizational change, strategy or leadership initiatives

having consultants who can provide of a frame of reference for clients (even if it isn't a perfect mirror) has been a differentiator for telos.

"We use the term 'consultant', because often times the definition of coach is you listen, you don't give advice. You listen, ask questions, and draw it out. Traditionally consulting is where you give advice." explains Lentner "We don't want to go in and tell people what to do and proscribe things, so our model is really a hybrid of those two [coaching and consulting]. Our clients look to us for advice and information."

Blaszak points out that there isn't a lot of

consistency in the marketplace when it comes to the specific terms. She's had some people want to refer to it as executive coach, others want the word mentor. For some organizations, leadership consultant has been the term of choice. Regardless of the words used, Blaszak and Lentner focus on the value that telos can bring to the company's clients by focusing on having the best talent. "Having the right people and the way that we customize the whole engagement – that's a strength for us." Says Blaszak.

While the terms vary, what is consistent is the attention that the telos



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institute, and Blaszak and Lentner in particular, put into the care and development of each consultant. Lentner gets excited as she talks about how they've built the webinar series based on direct and immediate feedback from the consultants who participate. She and Wendy have gone so far as to ask what the teams want to hear about out or learn about next. They make adjustments based on that feedback. Lentner points out that the feedback they seek is about more than the learning and development opportunities that telos provides.

"We give them a lot of feedback on how they did on a project. What worked, where we could use improvement and what we want to help them develop. But we're also starting to ask 'How have we done? How are we working for you?'" Lentner says "We know it's different paradigm for many."

"Exactly!" Blaszak replies "What other company is investing in their consultants the way we are? Who else is listening, actively seeking their feedback and then incorporating it? It's because we care about them and the talents they bring. We want them to be happy and engaged."

That means the leadership team at telos is working hard to serve two clients. The ones that contract with the company for engagements around leadership, strategy, and change – and the community of consultants who provide the talent and expertise to fulfill telos' promise. It's a lot of work. Even more so as Blaszak and Lentner incorporate additional responsibilities into their newly promoted roles. Simultaneously growing a thriving business and working to ensure it's living the values it promotes can be a daunting task. The challenge hasn't diminished their enthusiasm or motivation. If anything, it has ignited it.

"It's exciting being in a place that cares about more than just the day-to-day work. The telos institute cares about their people – all of them." says Blaszak.

For both Wendy Blaszak and Kathy Lentner, it shows.

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