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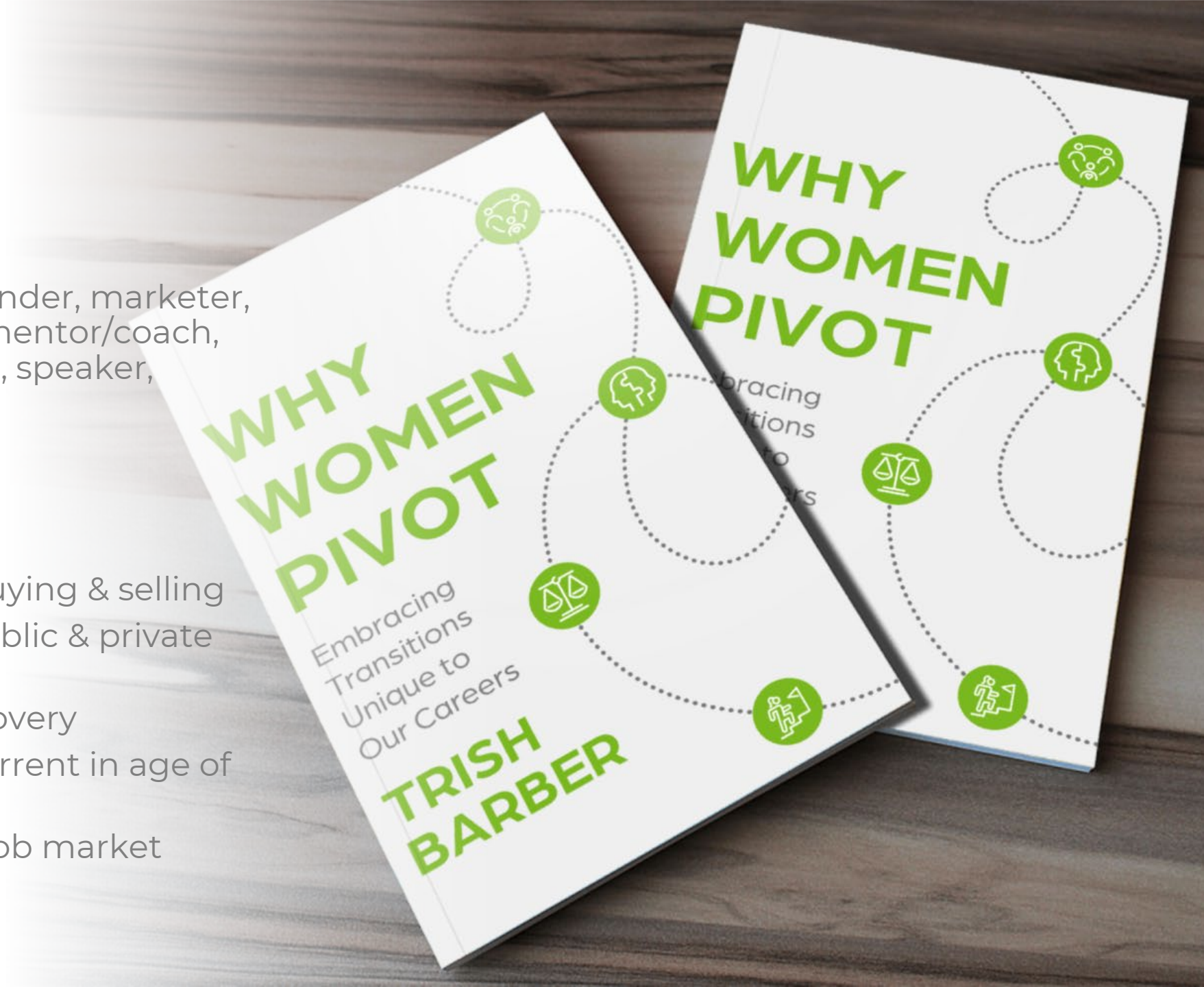
Executive Re-entry When the Ground Shifts

Pivoting with purpose in uncertain times



About Me

- 4-time tech-media founder, marketer, innovation strategist, mentor/coach, board member, author, speaker, mother/grandmother
- Perspective:
 - Entrepreneurial
 - Experience with buying & selling
 - Worked in both public & private sector
 - Extensive self-discovery
 - Working to stay current in age of AI
 - Kids navigating a job market



What about you?

- Looking for inspiration?
- Looking for networking?
- Looking for new strategies?
- Something else?
- How many government?
- How many private industry?
- Biggest challenges?

The emotional cycle of change

Shock →

Fear →

Self-Doubt →

Discovery →

Experimentation →

Growth →

You operated at enterprise scale under national scrutiny that doesn't evaporate!

Discovery



Likely working on

- Separating identity from employer
- Re-anchoring transferable strengths
- Viewing this as an opportunity

Self discovery

- Insight into your character, strengths, preferences, weak spots

Industry discovery

- What's out there/market translation



Self-discovery questions

- What energizes/drains?
- What have people asked me for help with outside of work?
- Are there processes, systems, services that I feel confident teaching?
- What problems was I solving in my last role?
- Are there agencies/companies/non-profits that are aligned with my values?
- What's missing in my industry right now that I could offer in a new way?



Industry discovery

Government careers often reward **longevity** and **scale of responsibility**

Private markets reward:

- Speed
 - Differentiation
 - Direct business impact
-
- Who else has the problems that I know how to solve?
 - What do I need to learn?
 - Who do I need to meet?



Through your discovery

- Develop a compelling pivot story reflecting clear forward direction

Not: “I lost my job”

But: “I am now applying 25 years of complex systems leadership to organizations navigating regulatory and operational risk.”

Guiding your network

IMPORTANT:

- Contacts become invested and will help if you tell them what to do
- Senior hires happen disproportionately through networks
- Online application systems disadvantage older applicants

CHALLENGE:

- 3–5 strategic conversations per week
- Reconnecting with former colleagues now in private industry
- Serving as an advisor, board member, volunteer leader to stay in circulation



Tone of Outreach

- Confident - not apologetic
- Forward looking – not wounded
- Curious – not transactional
- Specific – not desperate
- Respectful of their time



Example: Industry Insight

Hi [Name],

I'm exploring how to apply my experience leading complex, regulated systems at enterprise scale into the private sector.

Given your perspective in [industry/company], I'd value 20 minutes to understand where organizations are struggling with risk, governance, or execution.

I'm not job-seeking in this conversation — I'm gathering insight as I shape my next move.

Would you be open to a brief call in the coming weeks?

Example: Translation Feedback

Hi [Name],

I'm repositioning my experience from federal leadership into market-facing language and would value your candid feedback.

Would you be willing to review a short positioning statement and share where it resonates — or doesn't?

Example: Warm Introduction

Hi [Name]

As I explore roles in [specific space], I'm hoping to speak with leaders navigating [specific challenge].

I noticed you are connected to [name], I'd appreciate an introduction.

Role Play Exercise

You are reaching out to a former colleague. Your goal: Secure a 20-minute conversation to gain industry insight. You are NOT asking for a job!

Person A = Senior leader in transition

Person B = Former colleague/contact

- Context: “I’m exploring how to apply my experience in ___ into ___.”
- Direction: “I’m particularly interested in organizations navigating ___.”
- Ask: “I’d value 20 minutes to get your perspective.”
- Close: “Would you be open to that in the next few weeks?”

Feedback

- Did it sound confident?
- Did it sound clear?
- Did it sound apologetic?
- Did it sound vague?




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Northeast

Cultivating your network

Trish (Patricia) Barber  She/Her

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Great Falls, Virginia, United States · [Contact info](#)

[My website](#) 

500+ connections

Open to

Add section

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- Take inventory of your contacts
- Brush up your profile
- Posting on LinkedIn should be strategic
 - Sharing what you read
 - Sourcing
 - Notifying
 - Polling/feedback



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TIP: Doing this well yields:

- Strength/confidence
- Good karma
- Mindshare
- Market relevance
- Personal advisory board
 - Connector
 - Truth-teller
 - Optimist
 - Challenger
 - Strategist
 - Grounder



TIP: Professional development organizations offer opportunity

- Make connections outside your “bubble”
- Learn new skills/flex new muscles
- Leadership roles
- Age diversity
- Exposure to new tools
- Networking opportunities
- Industry content
- Relevancy





TIP: Single full-time role is not the only path

Consider:

- Fractional executive roles
- Consulting
- Advisory boards
- Teaching / adjunct roles
- Interim leadership

For Government executives:

- Compliance/regulatory insight
- Federal procurement
- Public-private partnerships
- Risk mitigation
- Crisis leadership
- Navigating complex stakeholder environments

TIP: No one does this alone

- Think like an entrepreneur - do the discovery work guiding those in your network
- Aggregate mentors/coaches/advisors
- Demonstrate curiosity about AI to counter “outdated” assumptions
- Prepare regular updates for interested parties
- Beef up your LinkedIn profile!
- Take mental health breaks
- Show gratitude

TIP: Small tactical shifts matter on resumes



- Remove graduation dates
- Be concise
- Customize resume to job description
- Emphasize recent achievements first
- Avoid overly hierarchical language
- Signal agility, not seniority for its own sake

Networking Practice

This is not speed networking – someone here can accelerate your next chapter!

Cheat Sheet

- Insight: “I want perspective on transitioning into ____.”
- Introduction: “I want access to leaders in ____.”
- Feedback: “I want input on my positioning statement.”
- Opportunity mapping: “I want to understand where organizations struggle with ____.”
- Advisory roles: “I’m exploring board or fractional opportunities in ____.”

Ground rules

- Your ask must be specific enough that someone could respond to it tomorrow.
- Timing:
 - 30-second introduction (Name + current focus)
 - 60-second positioning statement “What I’m exploring...”
 - 30-second clear ask



Questions????

Thank You!

Contact



Downloadable Government
Experience Conversion Worksheet

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