

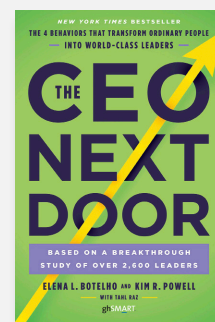
ACCESS INSIGHTS INTERVIEWS: FINDING TOP TALENT THROUGH BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEWING

Q&A WITH KIM POWELL



Kim Powell is a researcher, writer and consultant with gHSmart, a leadership advisory firm specializing in private equity and corporate clients. She is one of the leading authorities on the topic of C-level leadership and she recently co-authored *The [CEO Next Door](#)*, a *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestseller.

In our second Access Insight, Partner Steve Chang sat down with Kim Powell to discuss best practices in hiring and finding top talent.



STEVE: In your book entitled “The CEO Next Door”, you identify that successful CEOs are decisive, reliable, engaged and adaptive. How do you screen and recruit for this?

KIM: I’ve found that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior so I screen heavily on what the individual has done in the past and in what context. I narrow in on what they achieved, results they produced and mistakes they made and evaluate against the expectations for a given role. It’s important to know exactly what you are hiring for. There should be some measurable outcomes and clear metrics that define success for a given role. As you gather behavioral examples, make sure you are digging into actual results and get numbers. Look for the relevant magnitude of results and the pace or rate of achievement.

I’ve also learned that there are a few common traps to avoid when evaluating talent including relying too heavily

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Know what you’re hiring for
- Don’t fall victim to likability
- Go deep on results

on likability, prosecuting on hypotheticals and spreading your candidate too thin across too many interviewers. You shouldn’t simply trust your gut when it says yes. Likability is NOT correlated with future performance but sometimes leads to a candidate getting hired.

STEVE: What are some example questions that can be used to determine if an executive exhibits these behaviors?

KIM: I have a couple of ways to determine if a candidate has these behaviors. First, I take one or two roles from the candidate’s past experience that are similar to the context and role we are hiring for and I go deep into discovery using what/how/when/who questions like:

- What were the expectations for this particular role?
How were they measured? What were the targets, and how did you perform?
- What did you do to deliver against these expectations?
- What didn’t go well?
- When were you surprised by the market or competition?
- Who was the most difficult executive or employee you had to work with and what made this challenging?

Another approach I take is to spend half of my time learning what went well and half of my time learning what didn’t go well. The goal of interviews is to understand what you’re getting so there are no surprises.



“Good leaders aren’t just good at driving business, they are good at driving teams and sparking innovation.”

— KIM POWELL

STEVE: Can executives develop these core behaviors? How?

KIM: Yes, but the first thing you should assess is a person’s level of self awareness. If a candidate is self aware, they have the ability to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and will be open to addressing gaps or hiring people who complement themselves.

One of the tactics I use to assess self awareness is to ask and understand how much truth telling happens around them or how much feedback they hear. Do they know how they are perceived? Are their employees comfortable providing them with feedback? It’s important that they want to hear the truth about themselves, not just the positives. Candidates who are self aware are typically sensitive to the implications of their actions and aware of how their actions affect employees. When you ask questions like: “What would that team (or boss) say frustrated them about working with you?” you are looking for a self aware candidate to articulate clearly a few examples.

STEVE: How has the crisis impacted the critical leadership skills that companies seek when recruiting executive talent?

KIM: I think the crisis has magnified the importance of certain evergreen leadership skills while elevating a few new ones – e.g., digital strategy. Certainly, the ability to manage through uncertainty and the ability to adapt to change are critical at this time. This is a prolonged crisis and we are all navigating the “new normal” which requires focus, adaptation, communication and other important leadership skills. During these times executive skills are magnified, and it’s crucial to screen for these while interviewing.

Good leaders aren’t just good at driving business, they are good at driving teams and sparking innovation. Key things to look for in the “new normal” include the extent to which a leader is adapting and driving digital solutions while developing new skills across an organization. During these uncertain times, effective leaders keep their workforce engaged and informed. This helps to reduce ambiguity, while creating consistency in a world where things are constantly changing.

ACCESS HOLDINGS, a Baltimore-based private investment firm focused on buy and build strategies was founded in 2013 to manage a concentrated portfolio of essential service-based businesses in North America. Access currently manages approximately \$1 billion of assets. The firm takes a purposeful research-intensive approach to investing and seeks to build industry leading businesses in partnership with entrepreneurs and executives. Access Holdings focuses on buying businesses it wants to own versus those that are for sale.

DISCLAIMER

This presentation does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to purchase any security. Recipients of this presentation agree that none of Access Holdings Management Company LLC ("Access Holdings") or its affiliates or its or their respective partners, members, employees, officers, directors, agents, or representatives shall have any liability for any misstatement or omission of fact or any opinion expressed herein. Each recipient further agrees that it will (i) not copy, reproduce, or distribute this presentation, in whole or in part, to any person or party including any employee of the recipient other than an employee directly involved in evaluating an investment in any funds (the "Fund or Funds") without the prior written consent of Access Holdings; and (ii) keep permanently confidential all information contained herein that is not already public.

The information contained herein is preliminary, is provided for discussion purposes only, is only a summary of key information, is not complete, and does not contain certain material information about the Fund, including important conflicts disclosures and risk factors associated with an investment in the Fund, and is subject to change without notice. Any offer, sale or solicitation of interests with respect to the Fund will be made only pursuant to the Fund's confidential private placement memorandum (the "Memorandum"), limited partnership agreement, and subscription agreement, and will be subject to the terms and conditions contained in such documents in accordance with applicable securities laws. This presentation is qualified in its entirety by reference to the Fund's Memorandum, including without limitation all of the cautionary statements and risk factors set forth therein, the limited partnership agreement and the subscription agreement related thereto, copies of all of which will be made available in the future to qualified investors upon request and should be read carefully prior to any investment in the Fund.

The information in this presentation is not presented with a view to providing investment advice with respect to any security, or making any claim as to the past, current or future performance thereof, and Access Holdings expressly disclaims the use of this presentation for such purposes. Each recipient should consult its own advisers as to legal, business, tax and other related matters concerning an investment in the Fund.

Past performance is not necessarily indicative, or a guarantee, of future results. Information about the Fund and prior investments made by Access Holdings is provided solely to illustrate Access Holdings' investment experience, and processes and strategies. Such information is not intended to be indicative of the Fund's future results. There can be no assurance that the Fund will achieve comparable results as those presented or that the Fund will be able to implement its investment strategy or achieve its investment objective. Investors in the Fund may lose part or all of their invested capital.

Statements contained in this presentation are based on current expectations, estimates, projections, opinions and beliefs of Access Holdings as of the date hereof. Such statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties, and undue reliance should not be placed thereon. Neither Access Holdings nor any of its affiliates makes any representation or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained herein and nothing contained herein should be relied upon as a promise or representation as to past or future performance of the Fund or any other entity. Unless otherwise noted, the information contained herein is unaudited and may be preliminary and subject to change, and Access Holdings and its members, partners, stockholders, managers, directors, officers, employees and agents do not have any obligation to update any of such information. Certain figures in this presentation have been rounded. In addition, certain information contained herein has been obtained from published and non-published sources and / or prepared by third-parties, and in certain cases has not been updated through the date hereof. While such information is believed to be reliable for the purposes of this presentation, Access Holdings assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of such information and such information has not been independently verified by it.

Certain information contained herein constitutes "forward-looking statements," which can be identified by the use of terms such as "may," "will," "should," "could," "would," "predicts," "potential," "continue," "expects," "anticipates," "projects," "future," "targets," "intends," "plans," "believes," "estimates" (or the negatives thereof) or other variations thereon or comparable terminology. Forward looking statements are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties, some of which are beyond the control of Access Holdings, including among other things, the risks listed in the Memorandum. Actual results, performance, prospects or opportunities could differ materially from those expressed in or implied by the forward-looking statements. Additional risks of which Access Holdings is not currently aware also could cause actual results to differ. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, prospective investors should not place undue reliance on any forward-looking statements. The forward-looking events discussed in this presentation may not occur. Access Holdings undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.