**JPA’s Top Ten Tips for Getting a Non-Executive Position**

* Do some research first.  What industry and types of companies are you interested in joining and in what capacity?   You need to be able to clearly articulate what it is you are looking for before you begin your search.
* Be clear about what you are offering to the companies you have chosen.  Why should they be interested in you?  What can you add to their Board?  What are your distinctive skills and qualities and what evidence can you produce to support your past successes?
* Use Head Hunters to help you in your search.  But be prepared before you meet them.  They will respond if they can see you have done your homework.
* When dealing with Head Hunters don’t wait for them to take the initiative on the agreed actions and follow up.  You need to do your bit and they will take you more seriously if you are taking the lead where you can.
* If approaching a company direct to enquire about a Board role consider sending them a short narrative in the form of a bio rather than your CV.
* Protect your CV.  It is tempting to pass on your CV to anyone who looks like they may be able to help you.  But hand it over with care.  Your CV is your brand.  Do you know who it is going to?  How will they presented it to others?
* Make sure the Board role you are considering or are offered is the right one for you. Does the position really fit with your background and experiences?  What will this company do for you?  Do you subscribe to their values?   Be brave enough to turn the position down if it doesn’t feel right.
* When considering a role seek out those people who have recently left the Board to see if they’ll chat to you.  You might get a more accurate account of the company from them.
* Don’t under estimate the time involved.  It is hard work if you are going to do a good job.  Experts estimate that you can expect to spend 25 days a year on Board work as a Non-Executive.
* Network, network, network.  Make it known that you are looking for a Board appointment.  Someone somewhere will be on the look out for talented Board members.