



Les Ward – Founding Partner

Over thirty years of experience, performing in executive leadership roles in both private and public companies in professional services, energy, telecommunications, distribution, retail, professional training and not-for-profit sectors.

Since BlackBriar was started, Les has served as:

- Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer for a \$50 million international non-profit organization directing a complex restructuring of the charity's organization, its board of directors and financial department. During his over two year tenure, he has reestablished the charity's reputation with donors including international and Fortune 100 companies enabling them to extend its outreach worldwide;
- COO, CFO and Financial Advisor to \$10 million international wine importer and distributor. Over his three year plus tenure with the client, he directed restructuring of the finances of the company and owner which was instrumental the sale of the company. Les served as the sole negotiator on behalf of the owner, consummating the sale in June 2014.

Prior to co-founding BlackBriar Advisors LLC, Les was a Senior Director for BBK, Ltd., an international financial advisory firm. Before joining BBK, Les was Managing Partner for the Dallas office of Tatum LLC, a nationwide financial services firm, where he was responsible for managing over 75 financial professionals and administrative staff directing marketing, business development and client relations.

Prior to Tatum, LLC Les was the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chief Financial Officer for Young Presidents' Organization International, a global membership organization. He was recruited by the CEO and International Board to drive transformation to a professionally managed organization where he led turnaround from negative net worth to 6+ months of operating expenses in financial reserves. Les completed the merger with World Presidents' Organization, integrating operations, information technology, people and processes. With a combined membership of approximately 17,000 members, created the largest CEO membership organization in the world.

Les' diversified experience extends to other industries where he was President and CEO of a nationwide provider of technology-based distance learning products and services; President and Owner of a business advisory services company; President and CEO of an International provider of consulting and temporary services in IT, Finance, Engineering.

Les' accomplishments include:

- Chief Financial Officer for West Coast wine distributor, directing financial and operational restructuring including corporate relocation, implementation of operational controls, overseeing development of compensation programs and advisory services to facilitate capability to raise equity.



Les Ward – Partner, BlackBriar Advisors LLC (continued)

- Directing the reorganization of a professional services firm; closing unprofitable business segments; reducing corporate overhead by 60% saving more than \$2M annually; implementing branch office reorganization/cost reduction plans, saving \$10M over two years.
- As CEO, successfully completed the company's IPO in 1996, and increased sales from \$32M to \$320M in three years, primarily through organic growth. The company was twice recognized by Forbes Magazine among 200 Best Small Companies in America.
- Negotiated and closed \$431M merger with Romac International, Inc. (now Kforce).

Education and Certifications:

- Bachelor of Business Administration, Texas Tech University
- Certified Public Accountant, State of Texas

Affiliations and Memberships:

- Association for Corporate Growth
- Commercial Finance Association
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

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