The Consulting Safety Net Checklist

A readiness guide for knowledge workers preparing to transition into consulting or fractional work.

SKILL & POSITIONING

- [ ] I have identified 3-5 core skills or services I could offer independently.
- [ ] I have created a one-pager or LinkedIn post that communicates who I help, what I solve, and how I
- [ ] I have reached out to at least 3 trusted colleagues or clients to explore potential needs or referrals.

RELATIONAL READINESS

- [ ] I have listed key people in my network who trust me and may open doors.
- [ ] I have rekindled professional relationships with a few mentors, peers, or former clients.
- [ ] I am cultivating visibility (through posts, events, or networking) at least once per week.

FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

- [ ] I have saved 3-6 months of basic living expenses or have a plan to build toward that.
- [ ] I've created a minimal budget I could operate under if income dropped.
- [ ] I understand how much income I'd need monthly to stay afloat during transition.

OFFER & OPERATIONS

- [ ] I've identified one small, low-friction service I can offer immediately (e.g., audit, session, short-term
- [ ] I know my rate range and can explain the value I provide.
- [ ] I have the tools needed to invoice, communicate, and manage a small consulting engagement.

SPIRITUAL & MENTAL ANCHORS

- [ ] I've reflected on my identity apart from my job title or income.
- [ ] I have Scripture or spiritual practices that ground me during seasons of uncertainty.
- [ ] I've shared my desire to prepare with a spouse, mentor, or close friend.

INVERSION PROMPTS

- [ ] If I lost my job today, I know what relationships and resources I'd lean on.
- [ ] I've taken time to reverse-engineer the regrets I'd want to avoid in transition.
- [ ] I've thought through how I would explain my offer and value if called tomorrow.

ONGOING NETWORK & PROSPECTING

[ ] I have a regular rhythm for connecting with new and existing people in my network
[ ] I participate in at least one online or in-person community in my field
[ ] I dedicate time weekly to sharing insight, offering help, or following up
[ ] I’ve identified 2–3 low-pressure ways to generate new leads (e.g., events, online posts, introductions)
[ ] I can describe how someone might find me or refer me—without pitching

BUSINESS SETUP & OPERATIONS

[ ] I’ve chosen a business structure (e.g., LLC, sole proprietor) and registered if needed
[ ] I’ve opened a business bank account and obtained an EIN
[ ] I have a simple client contract or Statement of Work template ready
[ ] I’ve looked into professional liability insurance if needed

TOOLS & SYSTEMS

[ ] I have tools for communication, invoicing, and client file sharing
[ ] I use a secure method for storing and managing client documents
[ ] I know how to track time and send professional invoices

PRICING & POSITIONING

[ ] I understand hourly, retainer, and project-based pricing models
[ ] I can explain my value clearly and confidently
[ ] I’ve practiced communicating my offer and differentiator