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Your Learning – the Virtual Salons

By Joelle K. Jay, Ph.D.

As you've been following along the Journey to a Board Seat, you may remember we talked about the three "lanes" on this path:

- You
- Your Network
- Your Learning.

We've spent the last several months focusing on you and your network. Today, we're going to tackle the additional learning you can be doing along the way – the third "lane." This is where you'll find Athena's Virtual Salons.



The Virtual Salons

Envision for a moment Paris at the turn of the century. At that time, popular among the elites were what they called the salons – small gatherings in lovely rooms of intellectuals, poets and artists, where they could share ideas, get to know interesting others, and expand their horizons.

The Athena Alliance introduces the Virtual Salon – a gathering place for those of you on a journey to a board seat where, just like in the Parisian salons, you too can expand your learning in a rich environment with a guest list and topics cultivated just for you.

Virtual salons are group-setting video conferences, each on a topic, with an expert and a panel who talk about things relevant to women at a senior point in their career. Whether they seek a board seat or know they need to become more broadly a business steward, they can learn their way to success by joining the Virtual Salons.

Topics for Discussion

One of the benefits of the Virtual Salons offered by the Athena Alliance is that they present you with the topics you need to know if you're aspiring to a board seat. Not only are you learning, you are learning what you need to learn.



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A sampling of topics presented by the Virtual Salons include:

- Finance for the non-CFO;
- Cybersecurity topics
- Boardroom trends
- The traits it takes that make a good director
- Leadership topics – like how to negotiate
- The value of your brand

Notice that while these topics are important to aspiring board directors, they are also topics important to executive women in general. They therefore help you grow in your career currently while becoming educated about the topics you'll need on the road ahead. Virtual Salons are hosted by experts, coaches, and experienced members of the Athena community, and they give participants the opportunity to not only learn but participate in an engaging discussion with other like-minded leaders.

An Engaging Experience

Alana Schmidt, a Member Success Manager with the Athena Alliance, has seen members benefit greatly from the Virtual Salons as they have grown and expanded over the years. In her words,

“Our Virtual Salons can be a great source of value and information for members, as well as an excellent opportunity to get exposure to the community, exchange thoughts, and ask questions to other senior leaders in our network.”

The Athena Alliance offers several tracks of content including Boardroom Insights, Modern Leadership, Finance for the Non-CFO, Investing, Current Events, and Life Transitions. Virtual Salons are recorded and available to members at Athena's extensive [Resource Library](#). Here is a sampling of specific titles:

- [Boardroom Insights: When Your Network Isn't Big Enough with Deborah Ellinger](#)
- [Boardroom Insights: Best Practices to Achieve a Board Seat with Kelly Wright](#)
- [Current Events: Coronavirus and Crisis Communication with Andrea Bonime-Blanc and Mara Brazer](#)
- [Elevating Women Leaders: Increase Your Happiness and Resilience in Life and Work with Nataly Kogan](#)
- [Finance for the Non-CFO: Cap Table Basics with Shelly Perry.](#)

As you consider the breadth and depth of topics, tracks and offerings represented in the Athena' Alliance's Virtual Salons, can you start to make a list of some of the things *you* need to learn in the months and years ahead?



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As always, I send my best to you. If I can help you in any way, or if you'd like to explore Executive Coaching to support your success, please email me directly at Info@JoelleKJay.com. I'd be delighted to hear from you.



Joelle K. Jay, Ph.D., is a Director with the Leadership Research Institute and an executive coach specializing in leadership development. She strategizes with business leaders to enhance their performance and maximize business results. Her clients include presidents, vice presidents, and C-level executives in Fortune 500 companies such as Microsoft, Google, and Adobe. She is the author of *The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership* and *The New Advantage: How Women in Leadership can Create Win/Wins for Their Companies and Themselves*. To connect with Joelle, go to www.JoelleKJay.com or email Info@JoelleKJay.com.