

Tonya Rutherford

Founder of Nia Ford Consulting and former telecom industry executive

Tonya Rutherford is an Executive and Career Coach, Legacy & Relationship Strategist, Speaker, and Founder of Nia Ford Consulting. She empowers professionals to create purpose-driven legacies and build meaningful, strategic networks through intentional leadership.

A former Vice President and Deputy General Counsel at Verizon, Tonya brings nearly three decades of experience advising executives, negotiating complex media and technology transactions on behalf of Fios TV and Verizon Wireless, and leading high-performing legal teams. She understands the demands of corporate leadership and the questions that arise when professional identities, priorities, and industries evolve.

Today, Tonya combines practical strategy with deep reflection to help leaders define what matters most, recognize the value of their experience within and beyond their current roles, and pursue opportunities aligned with the impact they want to make. Relationship building is central to her work: she helps clients cultivate authentic connections that support their growth, expand possibilities, and enable them to contribute to others' success.

Tonya has spoken at SXSW, ESSENCE Festival, and Corporate Counsel Women of Color, among others. Her work is grounded in a guiding belief: "Legacy isn't something you leave behind. It's something you live every day."