

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Orlando Ashford

PERSON

Ashford, Orlando, 1968-

Alternative Names: Orlando Ashford;

Life Dates: September 14, 1968-

Place of Birth: Bangor, Maine, USA

Residence: Potomac, MD

Work: Miami, FL

Occupations: Business Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Business executive Orlando Ashford was born on September 14, 1968 in Bangor, Maine to Grace Ashford and Obie Ashford. Ashford attended Franklin High School. He received his B.S. degree in 1991 and M.S. degree in 1993 in organizational leadership and industrial technology from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

In 1999, he served as principal and partner at Delta Consulting (now Oliver Wyman), an international management consulting firm in New York City. In 2004, Ashford served as vice president of Human Resources Strategy and Organizational Development at Motorola, Inc. in Schaumburg, Illinois. He received the 2004 CEO Award for Outstanding Performance for his contributions to the Motorola Inc.'s global human resource strategy and his work on transitioning the human resource department to an innovative self-service model. In 2005, Ashford was named vice president of Corporate Center Human Resources and Cultural Transformation at The Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, Georgia, where he managed the human resources operations at the corporate center. In 2006, Ashford was named group director of human resources in Eurasia and Africa at The Coca-Cola Company in Istanbul, Turkey. In 2008, Ashford joined Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc. as Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources and Communications Officer, where he managed the areas of human resources operations, corporate communications, marketing and corporate social responsibility. In 2012, he transitioned to Mercer, LLC, a subsidiary of Marsh & McLennan, where he served as managing partner. Additionally, he served as president of the Talent Business at Mercer LLC and Mercer, Inc. Ashford also authored "Talentism: Unlocking The Power Of The New Human Ecosystem," which was published in 2014. That same year, Ashford was named president of Holland America Line, becoming the first African American

president of a cruise line. In this role, he directed the operations for a fleet of fifteen cruise ships and managed eighteen thousand employees worldwide. He also oversaw the company's sales and marketing, revenue management, deployment and itinerary planning, public relations, hotel operations and strategy.

He serves on the advisory board of Purdue University School of Technology. In 2011, Ashford was elected to the board of directors of ITT, Inc. in 2016 he joined the board of the Seattle Chapter of the Positive Coaching Alliance, and in 2018 he joined the Virginia Mason board of directors and finished a two-year term as board chair for the Executive Leadership Council (ELC).

Ashford and his wife, Samantha Ashford, have two sons, Orlando, Jr. and Jackson.

Orlando Ashford was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 6, 2017.

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