



This month's guest:  
Pauleanna Reid  
Founder and CEO, WritersBlok

**Bold & Black**  
A monthly interview series  
with trendsetting Black  
women entrepreneurs.

**BMO** 

## BOLD & BLACK: PAULEANNA REID

**Name:** Pauleanna Reid

**Business:** WritersBlok

**Industry:** Celebrity Ghostwriter and Journalist

**Tanya:** Let's get right into it. You speak often enough about your path to entrepreneurship. Did you always know you wanted to be an entrepreneur?

**Pauleanna:** Absolutely. I've always been fascinated by entrepreneurship because my father had a company for numerous years. He was a professional photographer for about 30 years. I have always been curious and found my way into books and memoirs, autobiography, documentaries, YouTube. I've always been fascinated by the trajectory of entrepreneurs and how they're able to kind of move by the beat of their own drum, right? They just had this self-assurance, unshakable faith, they had confidence. Those are qualities that I really wanted in myself because as a young adult, it took me a very long time to actually attain them.

**Tanya:** That's a great answer. What would you say, thus far, has been your boldest business move? You have a ton and I only know this because I know you personally, but if you had to pick the one that stands out to you the most, what would it be?

**Pauleanna:** Basically, I took time away from the business so I could take a six-week leadership program at Yale. This was a bold business move simply for the mere fact that I had to unlearn and relearn some things when it came to leadership. You could not manage your team the same way you're doing it before. In my former life as a corporate employee, I've come from a long line of monster bosses who use scare tactics to intimidate me into perfection. I was the executive assistant and so there was very little room for error. I think as I matured as a business owner, honestly, subconsciously I brought some of those traits over. I'm actually in therapy right now to better understand how people experience me when they walk into my energy.

**Tanya:** Wow. That's beautiful. There is a huge lack of self-awareness, I think, in the entrepreneurship space. There's a ton of people who think that entrepreneurship is just a matter of, I do something... I monetize my time or talents, and it's way more than that.

**Pauleanna:** Absolutely.

**Tanya:** That's definitely not something that I've heard ever anywhere. What has been your biggest financial turning point for your company? Your 'I made it' moment?

**Pauleanna:** The first one was in January 2019 when I decided to transition from my corporate job into full-time entrepreneurship the year prior. So, all of 2018, my earnings from my side hustle was \$147,000. That was an 'I made it' moment because it gave me the reassurance that I needed to take a leap of faith and transition into the next chapter of my life. I had been in a side hustle for 10 years, and I encourage people to side hustle for as long as they need to and not to rush the process. When I had surpassed a six-figure mark, I was damn proud of myself and I knew that I could take that next step forward.

As of recently, I started my first company at 21. I'm now 34. The brand of Pauleanna will hit a million dollars this year. I've never rushed the process. I don't look left. I don't look right. I don't get imposter syndrome. I think that there's a lot of conversation around getting rich in 30 days and people are operating with urgency simply because I mean we're in a global pandemic. Right? So, I understand that. But don't get duped, you know what I mean? Don't get hypnotized by cyber glitter. And just take your time. If it took me 113 years, I would still be committed to the process.

**Tanya:** Dope. That's a great answer. How do you think the lens of being a woman in your industry, so we'll take the ghostwriting business specifically, has helped you?

**Pauleanna:** Being a woman in my industry has helped me because... what I really want to say is that women's energy is powerful.

**Tanya:** You can say that. It's mostly women reading this. So, I think that's perfectly fine.

**Pauleanna:** We look at the world through a certain lens and we carry a certain confidence and power and energy. That is an advantage in conversations and an advantage when negotiating. And so, I think that's an untapped resource that we have. I think oftentimes we are taught to embody masculine traits, this is the energy that you carry that people respect, right? And so, when you're able to rest in that, when you feel, I guess, safe enough to rest in that, it's hypnotizing to other people.

**Tanya:** I think that's something more of us need to hear and understand. Especially the part where you talk about how we as women are trained and taught business is

about the masculine energy. You have to come in aggressively. But when women are like that, that's when you're labeled a bitch, because you are not using your innate feminine energy to your advantage. You can be powerful regardless of what you wear and how your hair is styled, and if you have makeup on your face. Your feminine power is still your feminine power. If you are trying to channel masculine energy, of course, it's going to go all wrong.

Who are some of the women who have helped you in your journey?

**Pauleanna:** Shannae Ingleton, Lauren Maillian, Shannon Boodram, Debra Goldblatt-Sadowski, Rakia Reynolds, Vicki Saunders. I will say the reason why I brought those names forward is that they've all allowed me to stand on their shoulders at some point in my career. Some of these relationships are over 10 years old. Mentorship mentally and physically changes the game.

**Tanya:** I agree. Mentorship, and more specifically sponsorship, is a game-changer. What has been one of your business' biggest challenges?

**Pauleanna:** I think sometimes entrepreneurs are challenged with sticking with the team that helps them in the early stages and not moving on when that chapter has been closed.

**Tanya:** Yes.

**Pauleanna:** And so, the person or people who got you to a certain point are likely not capable of getting you to the next level. And it doesn't mean that they lack skill. I still have a fantastic relationship with my former accountant and bookkeeping team; however, we've outgrown each other. And I think it's important to recognize it when it hits you in the face. But because I tried to hold onto that relationship longer than it served me, we ran into a lot of issues and amicably chose to part ways. But they helped the new team transition and helped them to hit the ground running with newer and bigger goals.

**Tanya:** I get that personally, for sure. How has either global health or the racial pandemics affected your business?

**Pauleanna:** When the world is in chaos, that is when my agency thrives. It allows us an opportunity to step in and oftentimes we are invited to take a seat at the table to advise the world's leaders and doers, how to navigate cultural, societal generational sensitivities in their messaging. We're problem solvers. We create safe spaces for our client partners. And fortunately, but unfortunately 2020 and 2021, we've seen a spike in interest and requests for our communication's advisory services and our ghost writing services. I think now more than ever before, company leaders are valuing communications departments because many people fear cancel culture, or they have things to say, they don't know how to say it, or they are guilty and they know they're going to be called out. Our job is to empower them to confidently contribute to conversations that shake up the world.

**Tanya:** It's good to highlight those. So, the last question, how or do you find a balance between your personal and your professional life?

**Pauleanna:** I don't believe in balance. Years ago, a mentor taught me about work life integration. I mean, I feel like if you chase balance, you'll always be disappointed.

I do have non-negotiables, there are periods throughout the day that I'm unreachable and the pandemic taught me to pay attention to what people don't say. It taught me that it's okay to step away from my desk and come up for air. It taught me the value of being intentional with check-ins on my peers, my colleagues, my friends, and not being so distracted. Before the pandemic, I'd be talking to you, but I'd be thinking about my next project. As a result, I'm a better communicator. So, whether that's communicating my boundaries or communicating how we can better partner together, like whatever that looks like. And I have my sanity back.

#### Where to find Pauleanna

[Website](#)

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**Bold & Black** is a monthly interview series conducted by entrepreneur and Canada's Top 25 Women of Influence Honouree, Tanya Hayles. Tanya is the founder of Black Moms Connection, an online global village of almost 20,000 and a non-profit providing programs and financial tools through grant programs generously supported by BMO.

#### Business Ownership, Starting

Published date: December 16, 2021