

## The Neal Management Group – Providing Inspection and Regulatory Consulting Services and Education Programs to Medical Facilities and Organizations



**Dr. Lisa Pinkney**  
Founder/CEO  
The Neal Management Group

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**Interview conducted by:**  
**Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor**  
**CEOCFO Magazine**

**CEOCFO: *Dr. Pinkney, what led you to start The Neal Management Group?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** I started The Neal Management Group, originally as a sole proprietor, back in 2001. That was as a result of being in the healthcare industry, specifically in the regulatory space. I initially worked as a medical technologist, and then I continued my education and became Laboratory Manager, an auditor with one of my professional organizations, and later on a Quality Program Manager.

What I realized is that there are numerous hospitals and doctors' offices that needed help when it came to inspection, complying with regulations, and reading and interpreting the regulations. As a result, I decided to start my business, more so to help people prepare for inspection, as well as to help people remediate findings from inspections that they had received or been through.

**CEOCFO: *What is your focus today?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** My company has evolved in numerous ways. I am a retired federal employee from the Food and Drug Administration where I worked as a program manager. Because of the knowledge I have received in the past 20 years in the regulatory space, I am now starting to offer educational programs, in addition to consulting services.

**CEOCFO: *Why now?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** Now is the time because there are other opportunities that have arisen, and I think as an entrepreneur, a small businessperson for 18 years, and a Quality Management professional it is time for me to move towards being a full-time entrepreneur.

**CEOCFO: *What format will the educational material take? How are you going to do these programs?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** I am initially partnering with my alma mater, to develop course offerings for continuing education in the Clinical Laboratory Science field, face-to-face or virtual. However, I will subsequently move towards them being on a learning management system platform.

**CEOCFO: *Where are you in developing the content? What have you learned so far? How are you deciding what you need to focus on; what is the right way to present content? How are you developing the program?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** I have thought about this over the past 6 months or so. The initial approach will be to develop a module on how to become certified as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS). For example, one module may be all about Regulatory Compliance. Another module may be about certification to become a CLS, a clinical laboratory scientist. Another module may be about Auditing. What I have done is to try to strategically identify 2 or 3 modules, create an outline of the modules, and subsequently develop the contents of the modules.

Initially, I started with developing the regulatory compliance module which is the area I am currently working in. I have had strategic conversations with business partners and colleagues to get their feedback on the need or necessity of this type of training. What I found was there is a greater need for students who have graduated undergraduate school with a bachelor's of science in biology, chemistry, zoology, forensic science, etc. and who are unable to obtain good paying employment because of their lack of knowledge and experience in a clinical laboratory environment. Additionally, I have colleagues who are struggling with hiring certified CLS to manage their laboratories. So, I shifted to developing a CLS certification training module first with a goal of delivering the product on a learning management system platform.

The CLS certification module is taking priority because of the need within the laboratory science industry. My alma mater Virginia Commonwealth University where I recently accepted a position as an adjunct professor was very interested in partnering with me to develop the CLS continuing education module. Therefore, that is what I will be doing within the next 30 to 90 days. We will be working collaboratively to execute the CLS module.

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**Dr. Lisa Pinkney**

**CEOCFO: *How can you put what you have learned into a course, directing people to when they should be getting advice from the outside and what they can accomplish themselves?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** That is a good question. Our current learning environment is geared to virtual learning and limited face-to-face courses. With the onset of the pandemic, we have learned that we have to do things in a virtual capacity, and I am open to that. I think the industry is also moving towards virtual capacity. I believe that many of my potential clients will embrace the virtual aspect of it, and I think it will be more cost effective. That is because if I have to fly all over the country to give this advice, it is not going to be economically efficient for myself or for the client. Therefore, if I can offer information in a virtual capacity, through a learning management system it will be a win-win for both.

**CEOCFO: *What do you understand, or where you have helped in the technology part of creating the modules, as you could have great content, but you need a great platform to deliver it on?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** I have seen good learning management systems, or excellent delivery of educational programs, and I have seen some that failed miserably. I think you are right on point, and that was a very good question. I prefer to operate in a phased in approach to projects. I believe if I perform a great deal of research up front with planning, assessing, evaluating then the execution of the project will be seamless. I have enlisted an instructional designer who is assessing 2 to 3 learning management systems and their capability for delivering the information. All of this is part of my initial process.

What I have found with my initial research and conversations is that some of the LMSs have AI (Artificial Intelligence). AI is being used in many different industries already, and I am very interested in embracing that as I roll out these modules from the learning management systems.

**CEOCFO: *How will you decide the pricing on your offerings? What goes into that aspect, from the business side?***

**Dr. Pinkney:** My initial research and assessments have been extensive. I know what the pricing may have been 10 or 20 years ago, but this is new territory for me. I am a quality professional, I have multiple quality certifications, so I will pay for the quality of a good product.

As for how I will create pricing for the customers, it depends on the content. I do have some pricing structures in mind, like for the CLS (Clinical Laboratory Scientist), CE program, I know what face-to-face MedTech programs are charging to get students certified. Some may charge \$5,000 for a one-year program. Therefore, in my mind, I think I would start out lower than \$5,000 for one attendee, or one student.

**CEOFCO:** *What are one or two basic concepts you would like people using your courses to understand? What might you know that is not general knowledge but you want to pass it along?*

**Dr. Pinkney:** I try not to make it too specific, but if we look at the CLS module, for me, learning is a lifelong journey. Therefore, I would like anyone who would participate in that program to know that you may not learn everything all at once, it is lifelong, so take the information that we are giving you and let that be a foundation. That is one thing.

The second concept that I would like people to take away is to be patient and give ourselves grace, because this is a process; it is a journey. I know it may be someone's strategic goal to say, "We are going to do this, and within a year I will be certified." However, learning overall is a process. It may take a person longer than a year to gain the expertise and knowledge and to successfully pass the certification examination. Be patient.

**CEOFCO:** *How do you feel you will be able to help people using your course go from having the knowledge to how to use it day-to-day in the real world?*

**Dr. Pinkney:** One of my goals is to make a product that is relatable, and that can be applied in everyday life. I have been in the industry as a medical technologist for 30 years, so I have seen the ups and downs, the good and the bad. I know what works as I have a wealth of experience, so I can truly speak to what they will see in everyday life.

When I create these modules, or even collaborate with colleagues to create the content, we talk about what the student/attendee will really need. Theoretically yes, you will need one thing to pass an exam, but in application, you have to be able to make that transition and utilize what you have learned.

**CEOFCO:** *Would you tell us what else is going on at The Neal Management Group?*

**Dr. Pinkney:** Right now, there is the educational product that we have been discussing. I am also doing some consultant work with local public health departments and private reference laboratories. I have a couple of small contracts with the State of Georgia as a technical consultant. I am a CLIA technical consultant. I also have a whole other organization that I am doing business with called Trulieve Georgia. It is a medical cannabis organization, and I am the president of Trulieve, Georgia. With that, I provide leadership in the state of Georgia. Medical cannabis is an alternative medicine, so I look at it from a medical lens and I have done quite a bit of research.

I have been in this field for about 4 years, and I have been the president of Trulieve, Georgia for about 2 years. We were awarded a Class One production license here in the state of Georgia, in September of last year, and we are opening our first dispensary, hopefully, in April, so that is a lot!

**CEOFCO:** *Obviously, you can multitask. We have established that!*

**Dr. Pinkney:** Pretty much! I always seem to have at least a minimum of 2 jobs throughout my life. It comes from how I was raised, and my work ethic. My mother raised my sister and I as a single mom, and she always worked 2 jobs, so for me it is normal for me to work hard and multitask. I also bring the same skillset to the cannabis industry. As a result, I was recently accepted to create a poster session at The Emerald Conference in San Diego on March the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

What I am working on has to do with there being no standardized approach to medical cannabis testing in the US, when implementing ISO 17025 requirements. That is what my poster session poster is going to be about. I look forward to presenting, celebrating, and continuing the research!

**CEOFCO:** *Why pay attention to The Neal Management Group? What sets the company apart?*

**Dr. Pinkney:** The reason why people should pay attention to The Neal Management Group is because we can provide products and services that other healthcare compliance consultant groups may not be able to provide. I am a diverse healthcare entrepreneur that possess an abundant amount of knowledge and skill, and I really want to share it. I think I can be an asset to any organization, and the products that we are going to provide are high quality. Therefore, I think it is worth seeing what we have to offer!

