

[Letter from the Editor]

Dear Friends:

Two current compelling corporate initiatives are the renovation of global sales forces and the continued right-sizing of work forces. Along with figuring out cost adjustments and rebalancing the balance sheets, most companies are attempting to recalibrate compensation schemes, including sales compensation. The stock market means that employees are working for cash, the old-fashioned way. This is making smaller companies able to compete for the best talent, and means that Directors of Compensation are the most in-demand job function around.

Training continues to be extremely important as we all deal with increased pressure on individual and collective productivity and performance. These corporate HR-related initiatives are responsible for our revenue increases in all three of our practice areas: executive search, HR consulting and contracting, and outplacement. Thank God. Worrying is not fun.

This month we would like to thank Lesandra Saenz, SPHR, HR Business Partner at Genzyme Diagnostics for her referrals and support.

On a personal note, please keep my fiancé, Adam Bernstein, and me in your thoughts and prayers on August 11, when we will marry at Holy Trinity in Menlo Park. I am so excited and nervous, and it's been difficult planning a wedding and running a business at the same time. But even throughout the worst of the stress, my happiness in marrying him has not wavered. Those of you who have met him will agree with me that I have picked just about the nicest, sweetest guy around! Thank you all for your support.

Take care,
Valerie

Ask Valerie

This month's Q&A session covers

Dear Valerie:

After several years as an HR executive with a generalist background, I ended up in a job where I just couldn't resolve the differences with my CEO, so I quit. For the last few weeks I've been working with a non-profit in an operations role. They're going to offer me a permanent position and while it's not HR, I feel like it would be a good step towards becoming a COO or CAO, which is my longer-term goal. The downside is that it's a 25% pay cut –to a rate I was at eight years ago! Should I keep looking for an HR role or take this role with the non-profit?

-Cautiously Looking

Dear Looking:

Take the job and be grateful for it. If you persist out of work for three months, which is likely, given the current market, you'll already have lost the difference. This ops. role has the career building potential you're looking for, it's honest, ethical, challenging work, and you know what you're getting into.

Dear Valerie:

Which psychological tests do you recommend to screen candidates?

-Closet Shrink

Dear Shrink:

Actually, I wouldn't recommend any tests to be used for screening purposes. I find the use of psychological tests at the interview stage as invasive to the candidate and not appropriate. Focus more upon behavioral based interviewing and keep the focus on the candidate, their job and your work environment. Go with your gut, and ask the other interviewers to try to articulate their guts. Psychological inventories can be good personal and professional development tools, if administered and interpreted well, with good follow up support. For career management purposes, I use a combination of the Strong, the Campbell, the 16 Personality Factor, and MBTI.

Dear Valerie:

I'm a CEO and I've gone back and forth with my VPHR as to how large our HR team needs to be. She does a great job of justifying all of her roles, but I feel like in today's market we need to be conservative and maximize our productivity and our headcount. We've got a company of 4500. Is there a ratio of HR people to other employees you'd recommend?

-Ratio Reduction

Dear Ratio:

Ahhhh, the great debate. While some executives may use the old adage of 1 for 100, it's important to clarify what you're talking about. What falls under HR? Are you including security, payroll, compensation, facilities, etc.? If you've got a strategic HR focus, a decent HRIS, you've trained your line managers well, and you outsource the fluff, than you can focus on hiring excellent HR talent in smaller quantities. Her team will be challenged however, if you insist on having administrivia and unnecessary hand-holding tasks. Human resources shouldn't include everything that affects the employees outside of the core business, it should be strategically focused on the attraction, development, and retention of the best possible human capital available.

Monthly Product Focus:

Consulting Product of the Month #1: Career Counseling

Now that the Career Action Center has folded, we've increased our career counseling capabilities to match the increased demand. These are extremely turbulent times and we strongly recommend anyone who is trying to strategize their long term career plan to schedule a meeting with one of our experienced, licensed career counselors, do some soul-searching and brainstorming, and get your resume up-to-date.

Consulting Product of the Month #2: Interview Training

Interview Training focusing on how to manage the entire recruiting and interview process. For new CEOs and other new senior executives.

Consulting Product of the Month #3: Group Outplacement

For approximately 50 employees affected by downsizing, we provide comprehensive outplacement services including layoff planning, notifier training and scripts for managers, onsite take-outs, supportive group workshops, one-on-one counseling sessions, high quality resume preparation and editing, job development, job search coaching, and job leads, individual follow-up, and customized services as

needed. Individual services include personalized letters to each candidate welcoming them to our program and explaining the details of our services, full-day interactive career transition workshops, individual resume development, a copy of Folio: Silicon Valley's Career Transition Manual, and an Internet Job Search Guide, and individual counseling and individual job development. By focusing on both the tactical challenges of a job search, and the emotions that come with this transition, the individuals develop and implement action plans in conjunction with the careful attention of their seasoned career professional.

Networking & Professional Development Events

Crisis in Corporate Governance & Accounting: Steps You Should Take Now to Reduce Your Exposure
July 29, 2002, Crowne Plaza Cabana, Palo Alto, CA

CEOs, CFOs, General Counsel and Boards of Directors of public companies as well as venture capitalists and are the target audience for this presentation. In addition to examining the current and prospective liability for directors and officers of public companies for corporate malfeasance, we will describe ways in which internal investigations and compliance programs can help to minimize exposure. A significant portion of the briefing will also be devoted to the role of Audit Committees: how they can ferret out and mitigate corporate malfeasance, 15 questions every Audit Committee member should ask outside auditors and managements and how your management and audit committee can best prepare itself for a crisis situations. The presentation will also cover best practices for the audit committee.

NACD Silicon Valley Chapter Breakfast Meeting: The Audit Committee
September 19, 2002, Sheraton Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA

National Association of Corporate Directors presents another excellent chapter meeting with panel presentation. Val's Tip: Great place to learn about boards of directors and do some serious high level networking.

Current Searches:

Within the last few months, we have placed executives in a range of disciplines listed below. Current client discussions promise more opportunities in the very near future. We strongly encourage qualified candidates of the following areas of accomplishment to contact us immediately for future consideration: Board-level Director; CEO; International Vice President, Human Resources; Vice President, Human Resources; Chief Financial Officer; Vice President, Sales and Marketing; Vice President, Business Development; Vice President, Strategic Marketing.

Director, Compensation, Benefits, HRS (East Bay)

As a leading member of a HR team of a publicly held software company in the Bay Area, devise and implement a companywide strategy for compensation, benefits and human resources systems. Work with the executive team, HR counterparts and staff and companywide partners to develop a program that supports the business vision of the company, particularly in regards to recruitment and retention that will be presented to the compensation committee. Experience with options programs and sales compensation as well as a passion for building HR systems is a must. Executive presence and leadership style needed, along with superb collaboration abilities, flexibility, and high tolerance for ambiguity. Strength in training, developing, and managing a staff is necessary, as well as the willingness to roll up sleeves and contribute on an individual basis as required. (Generalist directors with excellent leadership, management, and supervision skills who have solid backgrounds in compensation and have done HRIS

implementations may be considered). Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Manager, Training Delivery (SF, East Bay)

Responsible for the delivery of all training products requiring an instructor. Responsible for staying current on resource and skill requirements across the enterprise, identifying trends and future needs by tracking and soliciting feedback on employee development. Performance management, provide feedback, manage, coach, and mentor employees. 5+ years managing an internal training delivery function of 15+ trainers. 5+ years creating and managing a group budget, including ROI analysis. 3+ years teaching experience. 3+ years Call Center/Field experience or Operations experience. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Manager, Training Program Development (SF, East Bay)

Responsible for the development of all training products. Identify trends and future needs, performance management, responsible for managing, coaching, and mentoring employees. 5+ years managing an internal training development function of instructional designers and curriculum managers. 5+ years creating and managing a group budget, including ROI analysis. 5 years training development experience. 2+ years experience working with alternative media for course design, development and delivery. Call Center/Field experience a plus. Operations experience a plus. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Program Manager, Executive/Management Development (SF, East Bay)

Responsible for the creation, management, and delivery of training and professional development programs. Work with and coach senior executives; negotiate and deliver on SLAs with internal clients. Preferred: graduate degree in Organizational Psychology, Education or related field; 8+ years managing an internal management and professional training development; 5+ years creating and managing a group budget, including ROI analysis; 5+ years experience working with executives at the strategic level; 3+ years OD work at a systems level; 3+ years vendor selection (RFP/SOW) and vendor management. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Performance Management Consultant (North Bay)

Experience with performance management, skill set analysis and gap analysis, succession planning. Work with existing HR projects on initiative to last through the year. Role requires strategic planning as well as individual contributor work. Flexible, consultative demeanor a requirement. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Director of Human Resources (SF)

Looking for a high-end human resources executive with a best practices tool kit from well-respected large companies, and the roll-up-the-sleeves attitude of a startup. We need a person with superb communication skills and personal presentation, self-confidence, and high flexibility/client services focus. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

International HR Executive/Sales Organization

High level, sophisticated international HR executive used to working with global sales organizations. Experience in strategic planning, change management, JVs, spin-offs, M&A, executive and management development needed. Helpful if you've worked overseas and have a confident, direct, outgoing communication style. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.

Deal Maker (South Bay)

High energy, self-motivated, opportunity-focused sales-type to buy and sell large ticket surplus commodities for an extremely profitable, small, high tech reseller/broker. Have a track record of starting businesses/making deals and discovering new, creative ways to make money. Background in sales, contingency recruiting, stock-brokerage, telesales—any kind of really focused, aggressive, money-oriented activity where you both look for what to sell and who to sell it to. Probably not right for purchasing agents. Compensation is targeted to hit over \$200,000 a year. Email your resume in MS Word format to recruiting@vfandco.com.