

Tips, Trends & Thoughts from Valerie

## **Building the CEO-HR Relationship**

“I’m not happy with my HR person. We have a number of open reqs that aren’t getting filled and my Director of HR doesn’t seem to have any good ideas for getting them filled. He isn’t strategic and he isn’t proactive—he doesn’t come to me with solutions, just problems. And there always seems to be mistakes in the basics. He complains that I don’t value HR and yet I seem to be spending an inordinate amount of time on HR issues. The guy just doesn’t take initiative.”

This was a recent conversation I had with CEO of a mid-size company. He was frustrated and wanted us to help him to figure out what to do. Unfortunately, if this situation is like many similar situations, the Director of HR will likely be blindsided to learn that his relationship with the CEO has deteriorated to this level.

What can HR leaders do to ensure they don’t find themselves looking for a new position because they failed to recognize the warning signs?

Some questions to ask about your relationship with your CEO:

1. Do you only meet with your CEO when there is a crisis or problem?
2. Has your CEO changed your reporting relationship?
3. Has your CEO asked you to leave the room during meetings?
4. Has your CEO brought in other HR resources such as an OD consultant, special recruiters or comp consultants to augment what should be your responsibility?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may want to take action before it is too late. Here are some steps to consider:

- Meet with your CEO to ask for feedback on your performance. You might ask him/her to rate your overall success (on a scale of one to ten) as well as your skills in specific areas such as leadership development, retention, recruiting, etc. Ask questions to get more specific input rather than broad generalities.
- Great HR executives think more like CEOs—identifying strategic solutions to company- or industry-wide challenges—rather than focusing solely on more tactical issues. Make a commitment to be more proactive in bringing solutions to your CEO.
- Talk with other senior executives such as the CFO to get more insight into your CEO and learn how others manage the relationship with her/him.
- Stop complaining that your CEO doesn’t value HR. Add more value or find a new job.

CEOs deserve to have an HR leader they trust and value and you deserve to have a great relationship with your CEO. With global expansion, rising benefit costs, and increasing pressures on retention, now is the time to take a fresh look at your contribution to your company’s bottom line.

This month we want to thank Jim Harrington, VP of Global Human Resources at Synaptics, for his long-time friendship with VF&Co. Jim, you’re the best!

We also want to thank Wendy Beecham of Vistage, the world's largest CEO membership organization, for sending another referral our way. Thank you, Wendy. We are honored that you trust us with your colleagues.

Take Care,  
Valerie

### **ASK VALERIE**

The Care and Feeding of CEOs

Dear Valerie:

My CEO and I just don't seem to be on the same wavelength. I try to be sociable but she never seems to have time for me. Meetings get cut short and I am often left out of critical discussions. What am I doing wrong?

-Worried in Woodside

Dear Worried:

Let me offer some quick tips to get in synch with your CEO:

- CEOs expect people to quickly get down to business without a lot of small talk. Save the chitchat for more junior employees. CEOs and other senior execs view time as their most precious resource and value people who can quickly and efficiently take care of business.
- Be ultra-prepared for every meeting with your boss. CEOs have short attention spans and you'll gain greater mindshare when you are.
- When meeting with your CEO, don't give scores of minute details. Expect your CEO to know the issues. She/he will ask for details if needed.
- Pay close attention to your CEO's verbal and non-verbal language. You'll notice obvious clues when he/she has enough information.
- Only bring problems to your CEO when you are prepared to offer at least one solution. Make it a solution that you can take full responsibility for executing. When you have several possible solutions, be prepared to make a recommendation about which one is best and lead with that one.
- When discussing project goals or when predicting outcomes, use concrete, measurable terms. Also be prepared to talk about project length, number of employees needed as well budget and needed outside resources. CEOs will ask and want immediate answers to these questions. Expect your CEO to remember the details you provide, and will hold you accountable to meet goals, budgets, and deadlines.
- CEOs take responsibility. Literally, the buck stops with them. They like people who act with the same values.
- The more you can do for your CEO the more highly you will be valued. The CEO's job is to plan and manage. Your job is to do the work and solve problems.
- CEOs love business, and consider themselves experts in many areas, if not all areas. Stay current on trends, keep your expertise sharp, and aim to be more knowledgeable and skilled than your CEO.
- CEOs live in an extremely competitive world where they and their company are constantly judged with every stock trade, product review, and sales report. Be aware that you are always

being watched and evaluated. Train yourself to have the discipline to always look, communicate, and act like someone who CEOs think is a winner.

## **VF&Co In Person**

Why Growth is Often “Sideways”: Plotting Your HR Career Path in Biotech

2006 BIO HR Conference

October 3-4, 2006, The Venetian Resort, Las Vegas, NV

Careers in human resources are typically more of a “constellation” – in which you gain expertise in several different aspects of HR – than they are a pyramid to be climbed. How can you make sure that you are going up and you go sideways? Valerie Frederickson will lead a panel discussion with Lynn Lester, VPHR of Cambridge Antibody Technology; Larry McAlister, VPHR of Philips Medical Systems/ADAC Laboratories; and Marilee Moy, VPHR of Nikon Precision Inc. If you are a CEO, CFO, or HR Executive and would like to register as a guest, contact our Marketing & PR Team at [mpr@vfindco.com](mailto:mpr@vfindco.com).

Workplace Diversity Conference and Exposition

Society for Human Resource Management

October 16-18, 2006, Hyatt Regency Century Plaza, Los Angeles, CA

This conference promises to be an excellent learning and networking opportunity for all professionals who are responsible for diversity programs within small, medium and large organizations. The conference will also provide for HR professionals better understanding of corporate diversity programs from diversity experts and have the opportunity to network with colleagues in the field of diversity management. Valerie will be presenting twice on how we managed to have a 22 out of 27 diversity placement track record. To register for the Workplace Diversity Conference, contact our Marketing & PR Team at [mpr@vfindco.com](mailto:mpr@vfindco.com).

The New War for Talent: Competing for the Best Life Sciences Stars in a Diminishing Pool

2006 MEDIC Conference

November 13-14, 2006, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, CA

In less than a year, the job market has gone from a buyers’ market to a sellers’ market, making it extremely difficult to find the talent companies need. Executives are now asking themselves how they can compete for the key players they need to succeed. At the 2006 MEDIC Conference, Valerie Frederickson and a panel of HR experts will discuss the challenges, trends and practical solutions to attract and retain your most important asset—your people. Join HR executives:

- Theresa Hope-Reese, VPHR, Avanir Pharmaceuticals
- Lorna Larson, VPHR, Autobyte
- Gary Albright, Well-known Talent Management Leader
- Moderator: Valerie Frederickson, CEO and Founder, Valerie Frederickson & Company

This is the only conference geared specifically to HR pros in the life sciences industry and it will be a great opportunity for you learn from and network with the best and brightest of the industry.

HR Executive Career Success: Careerpathing to Win in the Global HR Marketplace

November 28, 2006 (7:30–9:30AM), ABD Insurance, Redwood City, CA

As more and more companies increase expansion beyond the US borders, HR executives must have the skills and experience to make strategic decisions to manage their company’s global human resources. Valerie Frederickson leads a panel of senior HR executives who have successfully made the transition:

- Tom Ezrin, Interim VPHR, KLA-Tencor

- Jing Liao, VPHR, Avanex
- Moderator: Valerie Frederickson, CEO and Founder, Valerie Frederickson & Company

This quarterly breakfast event, sponsored by VF&Co, ABD Insurance, and Littler Mendelson, is by invitation only but we encourage you, as a friend of VF&Co, to participate. For an invitation, contact our Marketing & PR Team at [mpr@vfandco.com](mailto:mpr@vfandco.com).

### CURRENT SEARCHES:

Senior Vice President of Human Resources (Silicon Valley, CA—relo fine)

SVP of HR to lead global operations for a \$20B revenue technology company. The company, which has over 120,000 employees, is uniquely positioned for dramatic organic growth over the next few years. In order to achieve this, they need a strong, creative, compelling and strategic human resources leader who can focus on cultural transformation while managing one of the largest and most global HR groups in the world. Our client requests someone with a strong HR generalist and OD background with significant management experience in US, Asia-Pac, and Europe; HR large company Best Practices; and MBA/MSOD. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Vice President of Human Resources in charge of Global Business Partners (San Jose, CA—relo fine)

Strategic VPHR needed for second-in-command role at one of the world's largest technology companies that is in rapid growth mode and has a new executive team. Responsibilities include managing global business partners, all change-initiatives, and contributing to Asia HR. The ideal candidate will have strategy-level HR experience, within a global corporation; organizational development and design experience; and a background designing and maintaining successful international HR groups. Heavy travel. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Vice President of Human Resources (near Los Angeles, CA—relo fine)

Experienced HR leader needed to partner with the CEO of a profitable Los Angeles area medical center on change and growth initiatives. Background in medical services, manufacturing, or other health related industries a plus. Experience with union negotiations, strategic communications, compensation and benefits strategy, and ER, required. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Vice President of Human Resources (Santa Ana, CA—relo fine)

Extremely profitable, publicly-held, health care services company conducting many acquisitions seeks Vice President of Human Resources who will work closely with the CEO and be responsible for driving and implementing a Human Resources strategy, including ramping up staffing. The ideal candidate will possess an energetic leadership style that includes fast thinking, program management, good sense of humor, and business and technology expertise. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Vice President of Human Resources in the Americas (San Jose, CA—relo fine)

World's largest telecommunications/networking company needs a Vice President of Human Resources who will be responsible for delivering all HR strategies and programs for all client groups in the Americas. The successful candidate will possess strong business acumen and have the ability to build and lead successful teams in a matrix-reporting environment. Prefer Fortune 500 experience in business and HR roles, plus consulting experience. Spanish and Portuguese preferred. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Senior Human Resources Director (Redwood City, CA)

Growing IT company is looking for an experienced HR director to lead all HR processes for their 213-person consulting and services firm. The ideal candidate will have a background that demonstrates his or her ability to lead an HR function or group and successfully get results in all areas of HR. Experience with C&B strategy, OD, and HR leadership crucial. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Senior Human Resources Director in charge of Business Partners (San Jose, CA)

Large, publicly-held technology company with an HR department in a state of flux needs experienced HR executive to manage all worldwide HR business partners and Staffing Manager. Be the top HR expert inside the company and in line for the VP role. Lots of room to shine, make a mark, and get promoted. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Senior Director of Human Resources (Palo Alto, CA)

US HR leader for a newly created European R&D high-tech facility, focusing on wireless products, including mobile phones. Partner with the Managing Director of the lab to set up and staff the lab. This person will be responsible for all hiring, all HR policies and procedures, employee relations, training, culture, and compliance. Report to Director with dotted line to Europe. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Director of Human Resources (San Jose, CA)

Growing financial consulting organization needs a strong and results-oriented HRD to lead all HR programs for 150+ employees. HR generalist experience including OD, C&B, and staffing a must. Strategic ER, succession planning, and assessment experience a plus. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Director of Global Staffing (San Jose, CA—relo fine)

Fabulous, well-educated staffing leader needed for one of the world's largest technology companies. Prefer Global 100 experience both in the US and overseas; at least 15 years of progressive excellence in talent acquisition and management; and MBA or equivalent. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Director of Human Resources, Asia Pacific (anywhere in Asia—relo fine)

For a leading provider of advanced process equipment for the global semiconductor industry. Responsibilities include collaborating with other regional HR leaders, ensuring the effective deployment of corporate HR strategies, and acting as a resource for Country Leadership, offering council and coaching. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Senior Human Resources Business Partners (2) (South San Francisco, CA)

Large, international pharmaceutical company needs two strategic senior HR Business Partners to work with a focused internal client group. The ideal candidates will have at least eight years of experience in large biotech or pharmaceutical company Best Practices human resource management, including strategic planning, succession planning, performance management, change management, organizational development, and compensation. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Global Compensation Manager (San Jose, CA—relo fine)

Large high-tech manufacturer seeks Compensation Manager with expertise in all aspects of general compensation. Assist the Director of Compensation in such global issues as compensation, benefits, and relocation. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Senior Human Resources Manager (City of Industry, CA)

Large multi-site distributor of construction machinery needs a senior HR manager to lead processes and initiatives for a diverse workforce. Experience with ER strategy, OD, and staffing a must. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Manager of Training and Development (City of Industry, CA)

High-level training and development manager needed to lead a team of 10 trainers and facilitators and design and implement an online training system for a large multi-site organization. The ideal candidate will have an advanced degree in training or a related topic and a background in management training, organizational design and development, team and individual assessment, and executive coaching. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Human Resources Representative (City of Industry, CA)

Ambitious HR rep needed for a fast-growing distribution and retail organization. Candidates will have good communications skills, understanding of state and federal employment laws and regulations, and at least two years HR experience. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

OTHER NON-HR POSITIONS:

French-speaking CEO for tech startup in SF. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

CONTRACT POSITIONS (START IMMEDIATELY):

Senior Director of Human Resources in Redwood City, CA. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

RECENTLY CLOSED SEARCHES:

Senior Vice President of Human Resources, high-tech company (Milpitas, CA)

Director of Human Resources, private school (Atherton, CA)

Leader of Human Resources and OD, biotech company (Auburn, CA)

Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations (San Francisco)

Senior Human Resources Manager, high-tech company (San Mateo, CA)

Director of Global Compensation, Benefits, Global Relocation, and HRIS (San Jose, CA)

VF&CO INTERNAL POSITIONS

We are expanding! Come work in beautiful downtown Menlo Park. Enjoy a well-run small business with 11 years of profitability, wonderful co-workers, a Who's Who list of clients, virtually unlimited opportunity, and over 50 stores, restaurants, dry cleaners, book stores, etc. all one block away. Help us take our successful business to the next level and have fun doing it! Best fit is a well-read, well educated, kind, ethical, polite yet funny Type A individual who enjoys collaborating but is self-motivated. Email your resume in MS Word format to [recruiting@vfandco.com](mailto:recruiting@vfandco.com).

Retained Executive Search Practice Junior Consultants (Menlo Park, CA)

Experienced HR Contingency Placement Recruiter (Menlo Park, CA)

## CURRENT HR CONSULTING PROJECTS:

Valerie Frederickson & Company is truly your HR Business Partner. Here are just a few of the critical HR and management needs being addressed by VF&Co consultants:

- Provide complete HR services for the small U.S. branch of a European company
- Supply temporary staffing manager during leave of absence of permanent staff member
- Integration of Equity Edge stock administration system
- Coaching and management consulting for HR senior staff
- Contract recruiters for HR department
- Consultation on post-merger integration issues, communication and compensation/benefits
- Identify critical behaviors and competencies required to succeed in the "corporate culture"
- Develop step-by-step diversity recruiting procedures
- Design performance management system combined with individual development programs
- Finesse the hire of a senior executive with the company's board of directors
- Train a public company's sales force in diversity sensitivity
- Coach CEO on management and leadership "issues"
- Support a start-up's management team's efforts to develop an "Advisory Council"
- Consult with pre-IPO company Executive Team on strategy and team effectiveness