

Head of Accounting Policy, Publicly Traded, P&C Carrier

The Company/The Situation

- Client is a publicly traded, Property & Specialty Lines Carrier that is profitable, has a strong combined ratio and is in the \$2.5BB GWP range. A new CFO came on board a few years ago with the charge to scale up organically; to continue to make acquisitions; to integrate the carrier's global finance organization and, to further drive profitability.
- Because this carrier is continuing to make acquisitions and is continuing to grow organically, the complexity of the accounting has increased. A decision has been made to expand the Accounting Policy function in order to ensure that the accounting implications from these growth activities are understood and that strategic growth decisions are influenced accordingly. A more dedicated Subject Matter Expertise is needed.

The Challenge

- The Head of Accounting Policy should have deep insurance industry expertise as well as have an ability to understand the accounting implications of acquisitions (typically, there are 6-12 potential deals in the pipeline at any given time) and, based on prior experience, be able to provide a frank assessment to the Executive Team.
- The candidate should be able to create the direction and guidance to comply with all GAAP, Stat, SEC and other regulatory global accounting standards/principles. An ability to forward face effectively and to be able to break down accounting implications in a succinct and understandable manner is important. The candidate should also be able to drive updated accounting policy into the fabric of the organization. Public Accounting/National Office or SEC fellowship experience is highly preferred.

The Choice

- The Client did have an internal referral in its pipeline. Although the candidate was strong, the Client desired contrast.
- ARExecutiveSearch had successfully completed a number of searches for the Client including a recent Head of External Reporting search, so there was a positive track record of accomplishment. Because of this, the Client was confident in ARExecutiveSearch's capabilities and deep reach in the Insurance Accounting and Finance space.
- The decision was made to engage ARExecutiveSearch on this search.

The Approach

- An initial reach out to ARExecutiveSearch's database of Accounting Policy contacts created momentum on the search and generated a number of solid recommendations.
- Although a number of solid referrals were generated, there was a candidate whom ARExecutiveSearch had been dialoguing with for a number of years who did have the public accounting experience, the insurance experience, as well as the deep SEC experience the client was looking for. A reach out was made to see if he would consider.....the candidate was open to the idea.

The Selection and Solution

- Meetings were set up with the Corporate Controller, the CFO and other members of the executive team. The meetings went well. The client was interested.
- The candidate had another potential offer on the table but working through the thought process with the candidate, he came to the conclusion that this opportunity was the better role for him given the combination of carrier size, his potential impact and his desire to use this experience as a lead-in towards a CAO role.
- An offer was extended to the candidate and, after negotiations, he accepted. ARExecutiveSearch stayed close with the candidate during the resignation and on-boarding process.
- The new Head of Accounting Policy is doing well, making good recommendations, and helping to scale up this carrier!