

Breakout 3: Agents of Change: Alternative Career Pathways for the C-Suite

Moderator



Amanda K. Brady
*Managing Director &
Chief Operating Officer,
The Alexander Group*



Nitin Batra
*Managing Director,
Global COO, Legal,
Citi*



Ann Rainhart
*Chief Strategy Officer,
Taft Stettinius &
Hollister LLP*



Ann Vermes
*Chief Operating Officer
– Litigation & Strategic
Initiatives,
Weil, Gotshal &
Manges LLP*

Strategic C-Suite Traits

- **Business Acumen – Business of Law – Business of Business**
- **Strategic Planning and Implementation**
- **Financial Acumen – Understand the numbers**
- **Drive Efficiency and Cost Management – Optimize**
- **Risk Management – Information Security/Cyber – Business Continuity**
- **Technology Savvy – Best use of investments**
- **Communications – All directions – Partners/Corporate execs**
- **People Management – pulling the pieces together**



Ann Rainhart

Chief Strategy Officer
Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

- **Law School, J.D.** Chicago-Kent College of Law (1993) – Evening division/Full-time work in Career Services Office, focus on employment/labor law, administrative experience, and lawyer careers
- **Coordinator-turned-Manager**, Chapman and Cutler Law Firm – Led summer associate program, lateral recruiting, lawyer evaluations, and professional development; focused on understanding the fundamentals of law as a business
- **Coach**, Career Services Office at University of Minnesota College of Law – Developed understanding Minneapolis market, lawyer careers, and relationship building
- **Manager Roles**, Leonard, Street and Deinard – A deep dive into human resources/learning and development, understanding paralegal careers, and all things lawyer career
- **Director**, Faegre & Benson – Led legal personnel department, served as Board liaison, gained experience with lay-offs, partner compensation and feedback, and strategic merger discussions and due diligence with Baker & Daniels
- **Chief Talent Officer**, Faegre Baker Daniels – Served on the newly created firm’s operations executive team, led a department of 50 professionals, and oversaw all “people functions” (i.e., HR, Legal Talent, DE&I, Pro Bono)
- **Chief Operations Officer**, Briggs and Morgan – Responsible for all operations departments (Finance, IT, Facilities, HR, Legal Talent, Marketing & Business Development), launched lawyer coaching division, and led strategic plan and January 1, 2020 merger with Taft
- **Chief Strategy Officer**, Taft – Launched Taft’s strategy office, a team of multi-disciplinary leaders; focused on all things growth, including leaders, laterals, and markets



Ann M. Vermes

Chief Operating Officer–Litigation
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP

- **Law School** – American University - Washington College of Law -- Note & Comment Editor, Law Review
- **Legal Roles** – traditional path-- US Attorneys Office (summer intern) -- Skadden (x2) (Summer Associate) -- 2d Circuit (Motions Law Clerk) -- Shearman (Litigation Associate)
- **Business Roles** – segued from traditional lawyer path, but always worked in a legal environment
- **Urban Justice Center (Director of Development)** – essentially business development, first branding experience, hired by Executive Director with whom I did pro bono work and volunteer fundraising while an associate
- **Linklaters (Head of Business Development-NY)** – lateral partner recruiting, worked with senior leaders, business development, branding, hired by former Shearman partner with whom I had worked and stayed connected
- **Bear Stearns (Managing Director)** – recruiting, client-side experience, recruiter was a friend who I had connected in her own job search
- **Weil** (multiple roles and increasing responsibility over 13+ years; hired by Executive Director/COO who had been my boss at Bear)
- **Director of Administration** (effectively chief of staff to firm’s COO, branding project, website overhaul, expense management, internal comms)
- **CBDO** (50+ person team, major overhaul of marketing & BD department)
- **Chief of Strategic Initiatives** (\$150 mm construction project)
- **COO** – Litigation & Strategic Initiatives (\$500 mm revenue dept, business planning, partner compensation, internal communications, certified as Executive Coach at Columbia, philanthropy/CSR)



Nitin Batra

Managing Director,
Global COO, Legal
Citi

- **Undergrad**, Monmouth College – double major Computer Science and Math
- **Co-founder**, Odessa Technologies – Managed all aspects of a startup company specializing in Lease Accounting software. Learned essential lessons in client experience and customer service
- **Technology / Management Consultant**, Crowe – Responsible for project delivery of large-scale eCommerce and B2B solutions. Developed core skills in managing complex projects, creating consensus around new ideas and communicating benefits of change to all levels of organization
- **Management Consultant**, North Highland – Created and led a new practice area. Continued developing skills in executive communications, project and change management, process improvement, relationship management, business development
- **CAO/COO**, Wachovia Capital Finance – Gained invaluable experience in strategy and business management, developing new products, optimizing P&L, delivering cost savings and driving sustainable revenue growth. Subsequently, helped navigate business lines through the financial crisis and acquisition by/integration into Wells Fargo
- **Productivity**, Citi – Began working in a highly regulated global organization with a focus on strategy, productivity, enhancing client experience, improving controls and reducing risk through organizational, operational and technological transformation
- **Global COO, Legal**, Citi – Built a high-impact global team responsible for the day-to-day business management of a department of 1700+ legal professionals and 1200+ legal suppliers across 80+ countries

New(er) Strategic Roles

Chiefs and Directors:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Practice Management/Department Operations
- Talent/Legal Talent officer
- Growth officer
- Global Recruiting and Employer Brand
- Information/Information Governance
- Data/Cyber Security
- Practice Excellence officer

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