

Specializing in Placing Accounting, Finance, Compliance, HR, Banking, Administrative and IT Professionals in Temporary, Project and Direct Hire Positions, Ascendo Resources has Reliable Solutions to Critical Staffing Needs

Business Services
Executive Recruitment, Consulting
and Staffing

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Eugene Holzer
Managing Partner

BIO: Eugene Holzer is a CPA, MBA with many years of accounting, financial and staffing industry expertise. Prior to co-founding Ascendo Resources, Gene had worked for two international staffing firms, in the South Florida area. Gene's tenure in staffing has included starting up and managing a multi-million dollar consulting division in Miami, which specialized in the placement of finance and accounting professionals. Prior to joining the staffing industry, Gene was a Management Consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers and IBM. His specialty included identifying cost savings, process, and financial system improvements for CFO's of multinational organizations, both domestically and abroad. Before becoming a management consultant, Gene worked at Merrill Lynch as a financial analyst and as an auditor for a CPA firm in New York. Gene's accounting and financial background combined with his staffing experience, allows him to effectively understand candidates' skills and clients' needs. Gene graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Accounting from SUNY Albany, and earned a Masters in Business Administration from New York University, Stern School of Business.

About Ascendo Resources:
Ascendo Resources specializes in placing accounting, finance, compliance, HR, banking, administrative & IT professionals in temporary and project opportunities, as well as direct hire positions. Through our specialized divisions, Ascendo Resources has the solution to your critical staffing needs.

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor

CEOCFO: Mr. Holzer, what is the concept at Ascendo Resources?

Mr. Holzer: At Ascendo Resources, we specialize in executive recruitment, consulting and staffing in the areas of accounting/finance, banking, financial services, information technology, as well as HR, marketing and administrative professionals.

CEOCFO: Do you focus on one area more than others?

Mr. Holzer: I would say our core strengths are in the accounting/finance as well as in the banking financial services area. Within all of the areas, we handle both direct hire positions as well as temporary & consulting roles.

CEOCFO: Do you prefer one over the other?

Mr. Holzer: I would say it is more opportunistic. Our mix is 60/40 at any given time toward a direct hire, but we have had a lot of success in doing consulting and temporary placement. From a business owner perspective, the consulting and temporary revenue is more of an ongoing annuity-based model. If I had to pick one over the other, we would pick the consulting or temporary space.

CEOCFO: What does Ascendo understand about the recruiting process and business process that others do not?

Mr. Holzer: What separates us amongst our competitors is our years of experience in the recruiting business as well as business in general. Our focus is based on location of our offices so we can provide regional and local market expertise. Our management team averages anywhere from eight to ten years of experience in the industry. I think when you are navigating through the employment market with both the client that is hiring as well as the candidate that is the job seeker; it is very helpful to both parties to have an individual that can act as an agent in between. It is helpful if they have the knowledge and years of experience in avoiding the pitfalls and understanding what it takes for both sides to meet in terms of common ground- a company hiring

somebody as well as the individual taking the right position for their career. I think that over all, the key in this business and the reason behind are recent success is our internal team with their years of experience and local market knowledge.

CEOCFO: What are the most widespread misconceptions from the candidate as well as the employer? How are you able to explain where the thinking might be wrong there?

Mr. Holzer: The best way to combat the misconception of how this business operates is by setting the expectations up front. For example, a lot of times candidates come and meet recruitment firms and they expect that the recruitment firm is going to find them a job. In reality, recruitment firms probably on average find one person a job for each eight or ten people that they meet. The same might go for a company that is looking to hire where they say, "I need you to find XYZ." That company might not have the best reputation to find that A+ candidate that they are seeking, so the way you combat that is to set the expectations up front. We need to explain to the job seeker that we are one resource, we are going to be an advocate for them, we are going to do the best we can, we are going to help them improve on their resume, we are going to give them some tips in terms of interviewing, and we are going to market their profile out to appropriate companies that meet their career goals and current salary expectations. The same goes when we are dealing on the client side and they give us their set of requirements along with their budget for the position. The key to success is letting them know up front that the salary they are looking for is wrong for the market and they will probably have to go \$10,000-\$15,000 higher or 10-15 percent higher in order to get what they are looking for. They might have to lower their requirements and understand that at the end of the day, you get what you pay for. I think that if you can set those expectations up front and let both parties know what the situation is and what the market is bearing, that is

when you avoid a lot of the negative feelings that the marketplace sometimes has toward staffing and recruitment firms.

CEOCFO: You recently opened an office in Atlanta. Would you tell us a little bit about the expansion?

Mr. Holzer: We have only been in business a little over four years, coming up on five years. We have had a lot of success here in the South Florida market, and we have offices in West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami. What we have found is that with the success and infrastructure that we have built, the market and economy was right for expansion. We put a lot of feelers out and we partnered with some local recruitment professionals in Atlanta that shared the same mindset, values in terms of the business, and experience in their market in Atlanta.

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– Eugene Holzer

We went ahead started up the business and have seen tremendous success right off the bat. We are very pleased with the start and we are looking for the next "Atlanta", so to speak. We are looking for some of those other major cities, preferably in the East Coast, to partner up with those local recruiting professionals.

CEOCFO: Ascendo has been recognized as one of the fastest growing companies in South Florida and received a number of other awards as well. As one of the best companies to work for in Florida, would you tell us how you earned that honor?

Mr. Holzer: We were invited by Florida Trend Magazine to participate in a survey of how companies are viewed by their employees. A completely blind survey was sent to everyone in the organization and they sent their results to the magazine. The results were favorable, and I think a lot of that

stems from how we treat our employees. It is not just the solid vacation and benefits that we provide and the flexibility of work schedule that we have for people who are sometimes dealing with sick children or elders. I think that we also treat everyone up and down the organization with respect, we demand it from each other, and everyone is considered a colleague to the outside world or a business partner, regardless of title or rank. On top of that, we are also a fun organization. We do some fun events, whether it is after hours dinners or going to a local pub. We also participate in some local races, such as local runs where we get tents. It creates a nice culture and a nice environment, so people enjoy going to work even if the job itself can be stressful.

CEOCFO: Why should people in the business and investment community pay attention to Ascendo Resources?

Mr. Holzer: We are a company that is definitely on the move. When we started the organization, we were in the depths of the economic despair. I can remember getting the tax ID on the day that Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy and we systematically built the organization brick by brick, so to speak. We have continued that growth strategy even as we have seen a decent level of success and the economy has grown. We have an aggressive management team that has far-reaching goals of success, and in doing it in a revenue generation way, a professional way in the marketplace, a business ethical way, as well as treating our employees well all at the same time. It is an interesting story to see how highly successful people who worked at other organizations in this field left those organizations due to some of the nonsense that goes on there to join an organization and create a culture where they can be even more successful, team up with quality people, and have fun at the same time. We have set our goals pretty high and we are excited about the future.