

## Today's CFO - strategic adviser and project manager



**Alumna Laura Raymer repackaged her Deloitte experience and varied corporate CFO roles into an innovative new business: an outsourced CFO service called CFO Strategic.**

Formed in 2004, *CFO Strategic* was the turning point in Laura Raymer's career which has seen her working in both practice (including three years in Deloitte's Brisbane CRG practice from 1987-1990) and in commerce with companies like AOL and Val Morgan Cinema.

### **Laura speaks with *The Associate*:**

"*CFO Strategic* was ultimately a convergence of all the things I love to do: project management, business advisory and strategic financial activities undertaken by today's CFO.

It also offered the autonomy of running my own show in Sydney balanced with an improved ability to add strategic value to companies who need it the most", said Laura.

"My 15 years in the profession has taught me many things . . . not least that all organisations need a highly skilled, experienced CFO. But one size doesn't fit all. Smaller companies may only need a part-time CFO while large organisations might need one and a half. In both scenarios, on-costs and sourcing the talent can be challenging. That's where we come in."

Along with her partners who include former Deloitte client Daniel Fah and Deloitte UK Alumnus Mark Lewis, *CFO Strategic* has hit a chord with a wide array of businesses ranging from start-ups to large listed where CFO's are non-existent, or time pressed, or are conflicted out of approaching their auditors for help. All have benefited from the input of an experienced consultant.

"And we're completely in tune with Deloitte's Growth Solutions offering," said Laura, "so we've been happy to refer (Sydney Partner) Gaile Pearce to some of our clients. Beeline Technologies, for example, needed an audit and advisory partner and having met Gaile, we knew she was right for the job".

Gaile already knew Daniel Fah, another partner in *CFO Strategic*, who had been a former client of hers. When they met up again at an AVCAL function earlier this year the time was ripe for a great new referral relationship.

"This has been a meeting of like minds," said Gaile. "*CFO Strategic* think like we do, know the middle market and they know what our clients want, like and need. Plus they typify what's so powerful about an effective alumni/advocate network".

Advocacy and alumni seem to be synonymous for Laura who has a reputation for sending work Deloitte's way - but is this due to loyalty?

"Not really. Being hard nosed, it's more about having professional respect and solid relationships, and I've always found both at Deloitte," said Laura. "When I was at AOL, I had their incumbent Australian advisers replaced despite them being part of a global engagement, because of the poor quality of service from them. I approached Ian Thatcher at Deloitte, they proposed, were engaged and they really delivered. I've also got a lot of time for John Greig (my first boss), Juan Ugarte and Nick Hill".

The future looks bright for Laura and the team at *CFO Strategic*, and Laura says her experience at Deloitte sowed the seeds for both a great career and ultimately, an innovative consultancy.

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