

The Weatherly Group

The Case For Strategic Advisory Roles



The Case For a Strategic Advisory firm vs Investment Banking:

Below is a summary view of working at a strategic advisor vs being an investment banker.

In an investment bank, the life of an MD is that of carrying the organization. They have a client list they are focused on calling on, Tier, 1, 2 & 3 clients. They have products they must cross sell and often bring the bankers from those product groups on joint calls. This aspect leaves little room for junior bankers to participate in the important process of client development.

At typical Investment banks, Junior bankers are often spending time building books for deals that will never happen. In most, and I admit, not all cases, they get little to no real client contact. Often, junior bankers also spend a major amount of time on financings. Let's be honest, after speaking with many VPs I often hear that "doing one more financing doesn't add value to myself, it's a process, do it a few times, the repetition does nothing about making me a better thinker."

At the heart of the matter is how an Independent advisory firm, often referred to as a "boutique investment bank," operates differently. The end game is the same point, end up at a transaction. The way to get there is much different. Instead of being "investment bankers," the boutique advisor is a "strategic advisor to boards and CEOs." How is this different? It's different because it creates an ongoing relationship where the corporate officers are calling upon the advisors on a regular basis to aid in large enterprise, whole organization strategic planning. Often these large enterprises are sharing their three & five year books with the advisor. Moreover, in many cases the relationship involves a formalized retainer where the advisory firm is being paid for the strategic work & analysis. This isn't as lucrative as a deal, but it does set the table.

As a strategic advisory with an inside view of businesses not usually given to bankers, the strategic advisor has an excellent view of non-core assets that are ripe for carve out and divestiture. At the same time, there is a unique position to be able to present potential acquisitions in the form of a very targeted pitch at a receptive listener. This is very different than sitting and listening to yet another banker showing you 30 of the same great ideas in the widgets sector.

This all sounds great and interesting, but how does it affect your work as a younger banker? Much of my knowledge of this flows from the people I have placed in these firms. Typical things I am told are –
The most immediate adjustment in my day to day work was that much of the analysis I was performing had nothing to do with a transaction, but was completely focused on operational strategy for an ongoing client.



Why Weatherly?

When I was at a bulge bracket firm in a large industry group, I had no idea if my MD knew who I was. At the boutique Partners come back from client meetings, pull together the entire team for a strategy discussion about what direction to take and then send the Junior bankers back to craft the strategic pitch. There is no strategy, we the junior bankers come up with the strategic alternatives and present them with well thought out analysis. Because the Partner has no product bankers to tow along on meetings, we are often given the opportunity to meet with and present the pitch to clients. The work we do at an independent advisory firm prepares me to be better equipped to face the challenges of wherever my career takes me. Whether I go into public or private investing, corporate or startup entity, I am challenged every day to not think about a process, but to think about complex strategic ideas. To execute complicated transactions that have a strategy to themselves. This will prepare me better for wherever my career takes me, including to be a more advanced banker.

Case Studies –

[David Alexander Gross](#) – left Centerview as an MD, note this is the sub partner title. DA joined Sanofi as the global head of corporate development & strategy. This involved running a 180 person global organization. We find that bankers of DA's tenure typically do not leave to join a firm as the global head, they are typically a VP running a piece of that hierarchy for the global head.

[Dan Faga](#) – left Centerview as a Principal and became the CBO of an emerging growth genomics company.

[Daniel Dunay](#) – left Centerview as a Principal and became a VP of Special Projects working directly for the CFO of Blackrock. He is now in a senior management finance role at the firm.

I am not suggesting that the advisory environment these people were in is purely responsible for their successes. I believe that the high bar in hiring at these firms combined with the predisposition of the individuals hired into an environment that allowed them to maximize their potential created an individual poised for higher level of success than their typical peers at bulge brackets.



Why Weatherly?

Founded in 1990, we are an executive search firm that specializes in a variety of professional disciplines including: investment banking, alternative investments, finance & management positions in a range of businesses from startups to Fortune ranked companies. With over one hundred years of combined industry expertise, our principals consistently deliver high-caliber candidates with unique profiles that correspond to our clients' needs.

Consistently exceed expectations

At The Weatherly Group it is our mission to consistently exceed expectations, and we recognize that outperformance requires the understanding that drivers of long-term success are unique to each firm. It is our foremost commitment, therefore, to partner with our clients to specifically identify the skills they seek, and to develop meaningful relationships with our candidates to precisely understand their differentiating attributes.

Deep network and industry expertise

Our principals have over one hundred years of combined experience servicing a wide range of clients with a core focus on establishing long-term partnerships with both our clients and candidates. By investing in a deep network and identifying optimal fits, we have successfully grown the majority of our practice from recurring business.

High success rate

Over the years, we have built a high success rate by carefully selecting the best in-breed candidates that not only display superior credentials but also exhibit the values and vision to drive lasting success for our clients.



How We Work

Go beyond the traditional search process

At The Weatherly Group, we do not confine ourselves to the traditional search process. Instead, we continually redefine our assignments to attract the high quality talent that our client is seeking.

Comprehensive diligence of client's objectives

We commit to obtaining a comprehensive understanding of our client's culture, structure and objectives. Ever aware of our core partnership mentality, we actively invest in a long-term relationship in order to closely align our approach with our client's true long-term goals.

In-depth analysis of candidates' assets and motivations

We go beyond evaluating candidates' technical skillset by taking the time to understand their underlying professional aspirations, strengths and limitations. It is through this in-depth analysis of our candidates' motivations that we can narrow down our search to the most relevant talent.

Invest in a long-term relationship

We want you to consider us a long term partner, and as such we stay in constant contact with both client and new hire, even after the placement, in order to ensure a smooth transition and integration.

We take the time to share our experience with candidates still assessing options

Given our extensive experience working directly with professionals and leading businesses, clients trust our opinion and frequently seek our perspective on important news in the industry, current hiring trends, and where we believe it will head next.



Testimonials

"We have relied on few select and consistent group of search firms for the past decade to build our business. **The Weatherly Group has been our preferred provider and has delivered selective and well diligenced candidates for each opening in which we have partnered with them.** They are principled, professional and appropriately communicative at all times during the process and we consider them a key partner in helping us meet our human capital objectives."

– Global Head of Investment Banking Human Resources, Bulge Bracket Investment Bank

"Our 30 person investment bank has worked exclusively with The Weatherly Group for approximately 6 months. We selected Weatherly due to its unsurpassed professional service and flexibility. **Weatherly's recruiters took the time to learn about our unique operating model and tailored the candidates they showed us appropriately.** As a result, we have extended offers to nearly a third of the candidates they introduced to our team producing three seasoned senior banker hires who have already contributed meaningfully to our current revenues. We fully expect that Weatherly will remain an important partner of the firm."

– Managing Director, Boutique Investment Bank

"We have worked with The Weatherly Group across a wide breadth of positions, from junior to senior bankers to CFO and other senior finance professionals. The Weatherly Group consistently delivers highly qualified, intelligent and strong cultural fit candidates on a timely basis. Most importantly, they make it a priority to understand our firm and its unique needs. **Our success rate with their team is exceptionally high and it dramatically changes the recruiting dynamic for our firm and our portfolio companies.**"

– Finance Director-Portfolio Operations(CFO) – Global Private Equity Firm



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Want to learn more about how The Weatherly Group can help you with your next job search?

If you would like to obtain a full set of a credentials for The Weatherly Group, including team biographies and services offered, please contact:

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