



HEFA

Case Study



“The CFO Recruit team was great to work with, prompt to respond and was clear in their expectations. We were presented with a selection of strong candidates, and Christine helped us choose the one that best fit our requirements. We are thrilled to have worked with CFO Recruit, as the CFO we brought in is doing a great job and is already exceeding our expectations.”

Michelle Page,
Chief People Officer, HFA

Key achievements

- HFA needed to replace their existing CFO following a recognized misalignment with the firm's ESOP model, operational culture and strategic direction.
- CFO Recruit conducted a confidential retained search, producing a longlist of 450 candidates and completing competency-based interviews with 21 individuals.
- A shortlist of 10 candidates was presented to the client, with 4 progressed to interview stage, resulting in a clear preferred candidate.
- The appointed CFO has now been in post for 12 months and is exceeding the expectations of the leadership team.

The Challenge



A Confidential Search

Finding the right CFO for an employee-owned business demands a highly targeted approach. For HFA, the decision to begin a search stemmed from the recognition that the business had evolved and that it now required a CFO with deep expertise in the compliance demands specific to an ESOP-structured organization. The incumbent CFO, while valued, was no longer the right fit for the direction the company was heading.

That specificity defined the entire search. The focus was on candidates with direct, hands-on experience operating within an ESOP environment, combined with relevant industry knowledge. Equally important was the need for discretion given the sensitivity of replacing a sitting executive and confidentiality was paramount throughout the process.

Christine Schneider, Regional Director at CFO Recruit, reflected on the assignment:

“This was a highly specific search, but HFA is a great business and it was genuinely exciting to bring this opportunity to our CFO network. We concentrated our efforts on candidates with real, proven experience inside an employee-owned structure and made sure that every individual we presented could authentically demonstrate that.”

HFA partnered exclusively with CFO Recruit drawing on their specialist network and structured search methodology to find the right person for a role with a very specific set of requirements.

The Search



The Recruitment Process

CFO Recruit approached the assignment with a thorough and structured process, keeping the client informed throughout and ensuring that every candidate presented had been rigorously assessed before reaching HFA's leadership team.

This process included the following steps:

- **Initial Consultation** CFO Recruit worked closely with HFA to define the brief, covering both the technical requirements and the cultural fit for an employee-owned business.
- **Targeted Search:** Outreach was focused on identifying CFOs with hands-on experience in ESOP organizations and relevant sector backgrounds, ensuring the candidate pool was genuinely fit for purpose from the outset.
- **Longlisting:** 450 candidates were identified and reviewed, forming the foundation of a thorough and well-managed screening process.
- **Competency-based Shortlisting:** CFO Recruit conducted in-depth interviews with 21 candidates, shortlisting 10 candidates. Shortlisted profiles were presented to the client, providing genuine options without overwhelming the internal team with volume.
- **Final Interviews and Placement:** HFA interviewed 4 candidates from the shortlist. One stood out clearly as the strongest fit and was appointed. That individual has now been in the role for 12 months.

Why CFO Recruit?



Why CFO Recruit?

CFO Recruit's ability to run a confidential, focused search within a niche talent pool gave HFA the outcome they needed: A CFO who was not just technically capable but genuinely aligned with the firm's culture and ownership structure.

By working with a recruiter that specializes in senior finance appointments, HFA avoided the risks that come with a broadly cast search. CFO Recruit filtered a large initial pool down to a focused, high-quality shortlist, meaning the leadership team's time was spent evaluating genuinely strong candidates rather than sifting through unsuitable ones.

Michelle Page reflected on how the engagement played out:

“Christine was great to work with, prompt to respond and was clear in her expectations. She presented us with a selection of strong candidates, and helped us choose the one that best fit our requirements. We are thrilled to have worked with CFO Recruit, as the CFO we brought in is doing a great job and is already exceeding our expectations.”

For HFA, the partnership delivered more than a hire. It delivered the right hire, and the results have spoken for themselves.



We'll help you find the perfect candidate

If you are looking for an exceptional CFO, or another Senior Executive, please talk to us about your requirements.

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