

## 5 Insights From Garden City Group GC Scott Nader

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Scott D. Nader is the executive vice president and general counsel of legal administration company Garden City Group LLC. He oversees GCG's legal department, as well as its compliance, diversity & inclusion and IT functions. Drawing on more than 20 years of international experience advising and leading organizations, he is responsible for the development and implementation of process-improvement strategies that directly impact the effectiveness of the company's client solutions.



Scott D. Nader

Prior to joining GCG, Nader served as vice president and chief counsel of the Americas for GCG's parent organization, global insurance services firm Crawford & Company. In that role, he oversaw the legal and regulatory affairs for the company's operations in the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Earlier in his career, Nader worked in legal and commercial roles with U.K.-based global engineering and consulting firm Amec Foster Wheeler PLC, where he supported the company's businesses in North and South America. He also spent seven years in private legal practice and served as a U.S. Army officer in a rapid deployment unit assigned in the Middle East, where he led and managed teams of 75 soldiers and noncommissioned officers with over \$20 million in vehicles and equipment.

As a participant in Law360's Q&A series with leading in-house counsel, Scott Nader shared his perspective on five questions:

### **Q: What accomplishment as an attorney are you most proud of?**

A: There are many things that I am proud of, but I am always most satisfied by projects where the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts, or where the end result truly creates value for the business and for the client.

I have experienced this in several different settings, but one in particular exemplifies what can be accomplished when a challenge is met with that end result in mind from the start. While working for Amec Foster Wheeler, I was asked to assist a multinational, cross-business unit team tasked with designing and constructing a new paper mill in South Africa. The project required coordination among engineers in the U.S., Chile and Canada, construction crews in Africa, and local tribal leaders to deliver the best solution. My role was to coordinate the legal and commercial aspects of this international collaboration, ranging from tax and pricing strategy to negotiating internal and external contracts — all

while optimizing the return on the project and further developing our relationships. I had to identify and leverage the strengths of each individual and organization, while finding the most effective and efficient ways to work across borders and oceans.

Our ultimate success on that project helped me to realize that I thrive in the role that I'm fortunate enough to hold at GCG today: that of a strategic partner at the critical intersections of practical, legal and business deliverables. Those projects that create value both for the company and for our clients are the most memorable.

**Q: What is your No. 1 selection criterion when choosing outside counsel?**

A: GCG has a deep bench of capable, in-house attorneys whose expertise covers corporate, operational, employment, compliance and administrative matters. In cases where we require outside consulting or expertise, however, the single most important selection criterion for choosing outside counsel is skill in solving the specific legal challenge. But we are also selective about choosing outside counsel that share our values and with whom we see the opportunity to build longer-term partnerships.

Any outside counsel we retain must share our values. For example, GCG is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes diversity, inclusion and respect for all of its employees, partners and vendors. Mentorship is a core component of our business model. We recognize that our differences make both our organization and our decisions better, and we demand that each person at GCG treats others with dignity and respect.

When we do bring on outside counsel, we look to those firms — including our clients — who ascribe to those same values and with whom we have established relationships built on trust and success. Our hope is that by extending opportunities to these firms we may deepen those important partnerships and, ultimately, grow our business.

**Q: What advice would you give to an attorney considering the jump to in-house legal work?**

A: My advice is to first spend some time evaluating what it is you like most about being an attorney. If you thrive in settings of certainty attained through personal research and the sifting of all relevant facts, then you may not enjoy the push and pull of an in-house role where legal and business demands compete actively and equally for your attention.

If, however, you thrive in collaborative, cross-functional settings where you must be efficient in finding solutions for issues with myriad potential answers, then the in-house setting may work well for you. It has worked very well for me. I honed my judgment and decision-making skills during my time as an Army officer in a rapid deployment unit where I was often required to make split-second decisions with a limited, imperfect set of facts. I was able to make the best decisions for my team by planning, prioritizing and processing the known and the unknown in a systematic manner. Thankfully, my decisions at GCG are not required to be made in a split-second, but the confidence to trust my own decision-making process and judgment is something I utilize every single day.

I would also advise the prospective in-house attorney to seek out organizations that share your same values. Not only does this make for a better work environment, but with so many questions to answer and with multiple correct answers from which to choose, sharing similar core values with your employer can be an invaluable reference point when giving advice.

**Q: What litigation, legislation or regulation are you keeping a close eye on, and why?**

A: We keep an eye on legal developments affecting class actions and bankruptcies, of course, but monitoring developments in data privacy and protection law is one of the most important things we do to protect our clients and our company. At GCG, we regularly receive, manage and utilize confidential and sensitive information during the course of an administration. Clients and courts must be able to trust that we are good stewards of that information.

We are constantly investing in technology that ensures our claims management systems and call center stay ahead of the curve. We provide ongoing in-house training to educate our teams in safely and securely handling sensitive data, and we host CLE programs for our clients on how to protect private information in a legal administration. We also commit significant time and resources each year to an outside audit of, among other things, our privacy and confidentiality practices, in order to maintain our AICPA SOC 2, Type 1 certification. GCG was the first claims administrator to earn this certification, and it is a distinction we have repeated every year since.

Notwithstanding our technology investments, we also pay attention to the basics. In our 30-year history, we have developed best practices for the more traditional data management risks out there. For instance, nowhere in a GCG facility will you find a ground-level computer that faces a window, nor do we ever replace a copy machine without first wiping its memory. We are committed to staying technologically current while also honoring those practices honed over three decades of managing confidential and sensitive information.

**Q: Outside your own company, name an attorney who has impressed you and tell us why.**

A: Not a day goes by that I'm not impressed by an attorney, whether it is someone I work with or someone who has influenced me.

However, the person who has most influenced my professional career is not an attorney at all. He is retired Lieutenant General Russel Honoré, also known by his call sign, "Raider Six." The fact that we have crossed paths so many times is one of the great privileges of my career.

I first met General Honoré when I was a young lieutenant serving in the Third Infantry Division. He was my brigade commander and, first as the scout platoon leader and then as the support platoon leader for my battalion, I received many memorable lessons from him on attention to detail and ensuring the care and welfare of those working for me. His exacting standards helped to lay the foundation of skills that would later make me a good lawyer: integrity, decisiveness, critical thinking and compassion. I also learned the importance of the phrase, "Bad news never gets better with age!"

A few years later, while in law school, I worked as a summer law clerk at the First Cavalry Division where Gen. Honoré served as the division commander. In that role, I learned how to apply the Uniform Code of Military Justice to various fact patterns, but also how to deliver practical, usable legal advice to senior operational leaders.

Finally, while preparing for my interviews at GCG's parent organization, Crawford & Company, I was delighted to discover that Gen. Honoré was serving on the board of directors. It was in this capacity that I got to know him best. We discussed his efforts to lead the reconstruction efforts following Hurricane Katrina and how we could apply some of those lessons learned to Crawford's own disaster response plans and business model. We explored partnerships with the Center for Disease Prevention and Control

in Atlanta, and sought to drive performance throughout the business, while solving problems that mattered to real people.

Gen. Honoré taught me how to be a leader — both professionally and personally. His career and mentorship have been, and continue to be, a source of inspiration to me.

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