Senior Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer
About WestRock

“We’re near you and around the world.”

When you join forces with WestRock, their 39,000 team members support your success. They have more than 250 manufacturing facilities, designs centers, research labs, and sales offices around the world. They offer global execution and local expertise that deliver seamless implementation regardless of where you go to market.

“We real value doesn't come from a supplier. It comes from a partner.”

WestRock makes consumer and corrugated packaging solutions that give their customers a winning edge in the global marketplace. They partner closely with customers on everything from beverage packs and pizza boxes to trigger sprayers and fragrance pumps to paperboard used for a wide variety of packaging and shipping containers.

They have a long history of entrepreneurship, leadership and innovation. Their history includes game-changing developments in papermaking, packaging design and retail solutions, as well as strategically building and strengthening their company’s capabilities over time.

WestRock consider themselves to be a part of the consumers’ team – as they strive for continuous improvement together. Every day, they combine practical innovations and rigorous execution in operating and business facilities across North America, South America, Europe and Asia to deliver products and services that answer unique local needs.

They expect to win as a company and lead the industry by achieving success together with their customers, employees and investors.
Delivering in a global marketplace.

For WestRock, diversity and inclusion are business drivers. It all starts with a diverse employee base operating in an inclusive environment. An environment where everyone feels valued and respected. WestRock strives to create a culture where people of different backgrounds and perspectives not only reflect the global marketplace and their diverse customer base, but also drive business growth and productivity.

Diversity and inclusion enhances their interactions with customers, co-workers and suppliers. It gives them broader market knowledge and a better understanding of customer and consumer preferences. More than that, it drives higher level of performance, engagement and contribution by their co-workers.

Put simply, diversity and inclusion allows WestRock to be better prepared to serve their market and increase their ability to solve their customers’ challenges.

Values

“Being an industry leader in scale and capability comes with a lot of responsibility.”

Values are the heart of WestRock’s business and shape everything that they do. As they join their partners on the front lines of their business, they can depend on WestRock to conduct the right way, every day.

Accountability
We are responsible for our work, to our team and for contributing to the success of our company.

Respect
We treat one another with respect and earn the respect of others through our action.

Integrity
We are honest, ethical and do the right thing.

Excellence
We strive to preform at the highest levels for ourselves and for our customers, investors and communities.
“Sustainability isn't just a word. It's the fiber of our company.”

For WestRock, sustainability is about meeting today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

As a key part of WestRock’s long-term business strategy, their sustainability platform is built on three pillars: People, Planet and Performance. By investing in their workforce and their community, acting responsibly with regard to the environment, and delivering strong financial results and innovative packaging solutions for their customers, WestRock continues to make their business more sustainable.

Renew. Recover. Recycle

For WestRock, paper is the original “green” packaging. Their paper-based packaging helps our customer move from the linear model of “take, make, waste” to a more circular model focused on recycling and reuse.

Their products made with virgin fiber—a renewable resource—begin with wood sourced from responsibly managed forests. They work closely with landowners to ensure the wood they buy is grown and harvested in a sustainable manner. WestRock also actively promote efforts to increase the amount of land certified to recognized forest management standards. They have created one of the largest chain-of-custody certified fiber procurement organizations in the industry, and they continue to grow it.

With one of the industry’s largest recycling networks, they reuse fiber-based packaging collected by their recycling business to manufacture a variety of new paperboard and 100-percent recycled products with fiber mixes tailored to their customers’ specific needs.

WestRock believes the most sustainable approach to fiber sourcing is a balanced one.
Position Summary

On July 1, 2015 two industry giants (RockTenn and MeadWestvaco) merged to create a globally dominant, $14 billion packaging manufacturing enterprise now known as WestRock. With this merger, the two organizations have established a commanding industry presence as they currently hold either the #1 or #2 market position within each of their product segments. Throughout the last twelve months, the company has identified tremendous opportunities for growth and looks ahead at future expansion from organic means, further acquisitions and strategic divestitures of non-core businesses.

With ongoing changes, the foresight of the organization has identified the need to bring in a new Chief Accounting Officer, as the incumbent is nearing retirement. With that pending on the horizon, our client is looking to recruit an influential, highly visible, senior level executive Accounting leader to step into the Senior Vice President, Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) role. Reporting directly to the Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, the new CAO will partner with the incumbent and work closely with the entire Finance team. Leading more than 300 professionals, the CAO will have full accountability and responsibility for directing the Accounting Shared services team, the Corporate Controllership function, the Financial Systems team and the Sarbanes-Oxley PMO organization.

The company has grown substantially in the preceding five years and this individual will be instrumental in further unifying the corporate accounting organization as one holistic team. As the world’s second largest corrugated manufacturer and supplier thriving with a unique product set, WestRock will continue to capitalize on its product differentiation through their global market-focused strategy. With a global team of more than 300, this individual will be a key leader in developing and driving adherence to accepted international accounting standards throughout the entire organization.

As WestRock continues to define its culture and operating processes, there are many opportunities to influence and drive progress and change through this person’s leadership. One area that is specifically a strong point for WestRock is the company’s strong commitment to transparency and forthrightness in working with the Board and Audit Committee. It will be paramount that this new leader continues to enhance and foster this strong working relationship. The incoming candidate will also be the liaison with the external auditors (EY) and additionally provide direct supervision to a Shared Services Group while supporting FP&A, HR, Treasury, Risk Management, IT, Internal Audit, Tax, Legal and other key functions.

With enthusiastic alignment across the company about their aspiration to be the global industry leader, WestRock embraces its next evolution. This leader will be at the helm of integrating future acquisitions, participating in any divestitures of non-core businesses, and engaging in the acceleration of international growth through strong accounting analysis, understanding and support.
The Senior Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) will:

- Direct and lead operational controllers in the oversight and the development and implementation of Company-wide accounting policies and controls consistent with SEC, GAAP and Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance.
- Provide on-going reviews and updates of the accounting systems and procedures to ensure that all balance sheet accounts (including all tax-related accounts and intercompany transaction accounts) at all locations are fully reconciled and explainable each month.
- Plan and direct the external and internal financial reporting processes, ensuring that an “effective system” is in place to consolidate financial submissions from operating businesses and subsidiaries across the globe that comply with all financial reporting requirements and deadlines. The “effective system” needs to constantly focus on the ability to equally consolidate by a) corporate reporting segments, b) operating business units and c) legal entities.
- Manage the global corporate accounting and consolidations functions for WestRock, confirming a proactive and preemptive process that is defined and streamlined while ensuring accuracy.
- Coordinate the monthly, quarterly, and annual close of books to ensure timely and accurate completion.
- Coordinate the timely and accurate completion of the Company’s Quarterly SEC Form 10-Q and Annual Form 10-K filings as well as any other filings required by the SEC in various transactions.
- Communicate pending changes in accounting rules and regulations to senior management which carry financial or operational implications and partner with senior management to resolve issues.
- Oversee the Company’s annual SOX compliance process including financial statement risk assessment, identification of key controls and testing strategy.
- Serve as the principal liaison with the Company’s external auditor (EY) and internal auditor to ensure smooth annual and quarterly financial statement and SOX compliance audits.
- Set appropriate standards for quality and efficiency of the financial reporting process to the CEO and CFO.
- Monitor the effectiveness of information management and internal control systems, while continually seeking to improve standards.
- Manage and update WestRock’s financial consolidation system and ensure appropriate training takes place across the organization, globally.
- Lead and drive further financial systems re-organization and re-design to ensure that all locations are incorporated into the JD Edwards ledger system as well as lead the accounting integration of any future acquisitions onto WestRock’s accounting platform and systems as rapidly as possible.
- Develop, recruit, mentor and strengthen the accounting leadership throughout the organization.
- Participate in and support any merger and acquisition, joint venture formation, asset and/or business sales/disposition accounting and analysis, with particular focus on the early identification and communication of how each transaction will be accounted for.
- Participate in and be able to explain the technical and operational accounting consequences of various intercompany transactions such as intercompany transfer pricing, intercompany dividends, intercompany returns of capital, intercompany investments in subsidiaries, capitalization of intercompany loans, etc.
- Present key accounting issues and topics to the audit committee each quarter.
With a Company strategy built around mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and strategic investments, it will be critical for this individual to have M&A and joint-venture experience on a global level. The successful candidate will have strong professional experience in the controllership function as well as having been a strategic, senior-level Accounting leader within an international public company setting. As a visible part of the executive leadership team, the incoming CAO must demonstrate a high level of executive presence, confidence and the ability to build credibility and influence others through a “roll up your sleeves” work approach. He/she must demonstrate unquestionable personal and professional integrity which aligns with WestRock’s corporate commitment to visionary leadership. The CAO should possess the ability to create, develop and coach high performing teams and act as a strong collaborative partner across the organization.

Specifically:

- Successful experience supporting the long-term view of a company’s business and vision through adherence to sound accounting policies and US GAAP.
- A demonstrated and sound knowledge of financial activities, policies and processes, including consolidations, SEC, Sarbanes-Oxley, and US GAAP compliance.
- Experience leading the migration of several different reporting systems to one unified platform.
- A strong history of focus on disciplined legal entity accounting, including the ability to consistently, correctly and timely account for all intercompany transaction types.
- Well-developed negotiation skills and business management acumen as they relate to financial strategy.
- Experience in communicating and presenting to audit committees and other internal and external decision makers.
- Keen ability to communicate and implement the strategic financial vision while effectively anticipating, driving, and managing through change.
- Possess strong leadership and mentoring skills to effectively delegate and develop professional staff in the accounting departments on an ongoing basis.
- Successful leadership of a high performing results-focused finance team with a clear ability to lead and motivate.
- Ability to utilize a direct and pro-active approach when dealing with difficult issues.
- A minimum of 15 years accounting controls experience in a global public company environment.
- Manufacturing industry experience is a plus.
- A Bachelor’s Degree in Finance/Accounting and a CPA are required. An advanced degree is preferred.