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Is It Difficult to Become Investor-Focused Once You Join the SEC Staff?



I taped a [video](#) yesterday with Corp Fin Director Erik Gerding where we talked a bit about Corp Fin's efforts to hire 60 new Staffers in the near term. Over the years, I've been asked a few times whether it's challenging to think from an "investor protection" perspective if you go to work for the SEC. It's an interesting question and I imagine the answer wouldn't surprise you – it's not that hard to change your mindset at all. In fact, it takes almost no effort to do so. And that's not just my perspective. I've talked with a number of former SEC Staffers who went to work for the federal government straight from a law firm (or in-house) and that's pretty much the unanimous view - putting on that government hat is easy to do. What you might find surprising is that it happens without any training, without any pep talks. I can't remember a single time that I was told to come at an issue from that angle when I worked on the Staff. It was just presumed. So I think that most that go to work for the SEC find it's a fairly smooth transition to becoming investor-focused (and of course, "capital markets" focused too). The key when you're there is to focus on what is – and isn't - important. Having a background where you've worked on the "outside" before joining the Staff helps to hone your skills at distinguishing what is a material issue. And what's not worth fighting for...

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