

MARCH-APRIL 2023

FCCS Support on the Path to the C-Suite



It's a fortunate professional who reaches their ultimate career goal. For FCS Financial CEO Rob Guinn, the achievement was supported by two FCCS programs: his own long-time participation in the Executive Leadership Incubator and a structured CEO selection process undertaken by FCS Financial's board of directors.

Rob began his new executive role on January 1st after 30 years with FCS Financial in progressively more senior roles, and including years of mentoring by Dave Janish, the organization's previous CEO. When Dave announced his retirement, FCS Financial's board took their responsibility to name a new executive leader very seriously and turned to FCCS to guide their recruitment and selection process.

After working with the board to identify the attributes they sought in their new CEO, FCCS' Jay Lux solicited a robust group of more than ten internal and external candidates, who then completed several self assessments. Jay, who is Vice President of Leadership and Organizational Development, compared these results against the board's identified parameters and conducted initial telephone interviews to develop a short list of six candidates for the Selection Committee to consider.

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— **RICK REHMEIER**
BOARD MEMBER AND
CHAIR, FCS FINANCIAL
SELECTION COMMITTEE

"Jay's knowledge of Farm Credit and ability to find potential candidates, and then to narrow the field by applying our own defined expectations, was really helpful," says Rick Rehmeier, long-time board member and Chair of the Selection Committee. "He made the whole process run very smoothly; we wouldn't have changed a thing."

The short-listed candidates were asked to deliver presentations as part of their interview with the Committee, responding to questions provided by the board and developed with input from Jay. Topics included their vision for FCS Financial, first 100 day priorities, industry and organizational disruptions, and other strategic issues.

"We had the opportunity to share our backgrounds, talk about why we were suited to the position and describe how we'd respond to the challenges and opportunities FCS Financial faces," says Rob. "With Jay's facilitation, it was more of a conversation than an interview, and we could lay out our vision for the organization and hear the board's feedback."

After a second interview with the full board, with the same format of presentation followed by Q&A, Rob was selected as FCS Financial's new CEO.

"Having gone through FCCS' structured process, the board is very confident in our decision to promote Rob," says Rick. "Among our employees, too, everyone knows we didn't just hand him the job because it was expected, he truly earned it throughout his years of service and proved it through the interview process."

Rob, too, started his new role with confidence that he had full board support, which was demonstrated during his interview conversations. Also contributing to Rob's confidence are the expanded knowledge base, leadership insights and network



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developed through his three years participating in the FCCS Executive Leadership Incubator (ELI).

“First and foremost, I gained a broader perspective of the issues and challenges within Farm Credit and at the industry level,” says Rob. “It’s a group of really smart, successful leaders who challenge you to think differently and be better.”

The ELI group meets twice annually for a variety of relevant content, with topics ranging from leading organizational change to board management to developing an executive presence. Exceptionally valuable to Rob were CEO Roundtable sessions, where current System CEOs shared their experiences and insights into creating a vision, building an executive team and many other challenges that come with the role.

“Once you reach the executive level, growth and success become less about skills and abilities and more about exposure and experience. The ELI provides both, which gives additional confidence when you step into the CEO role,” says Rob. “One of the biggest benefits of the program, though, is the exposure to the other outstanding leaders in the group, an invaluable network I still lean on regularly.”

For more information about CEO Selection services or the Executive Leadership Incubator, contact Jay Lux at 651.982.4568 or [via email](#).