



The Power Source

Igniting the Future of Florida



February 2024

Power Profile: Nicole Daggs

Executive Vice President, Human Resources
and Corporate Services
Florida Power and Light

What inspired you to pursue a career in energy and how did you end up in Human Resources?

I stumbled upon energy completely by accident. I was fresh out of law school and had an interest in the telecommunications industry. Long story short, there were rolling blackouts in California. The law firm I was working for at the time asked all first-year associates to help with the contractual and regulatory issues. I discovered an industry that not only powers every other industry, but one that also has a direct impact on the welfare of everyone every day. I fell in love with the mission and am extremely grateful to work at a company that drives our industry.

Human Resources has put me in a great place to pursue that mission wholeheartedly. When you've worked long enough, you discover that – regardless of your department – the people you work with are a company's greatest asset. Human Resources is all about the people and it allows me the opportunity to support the growth and development of the best team in the industry.

What would you like the next generation of workforce to know about the importance of corporate culture in selecting a job, keeping a job, and growing within a company?

Company culture impacts everything from how you interact with peers to whether you can expect to receive genuine feedback and coaching from your leaders. If you think about it, picking a company is a lot like picking a school or spouse. If you can find alignment in terms of commitment and values, there's a good chance you'll be happy long term.

If I were fresh out of school and deciding whether to join a company, I would start with the big culture questions first: Does the company's mission excite me? Is the company innovative? What's the company's reputation in the marketplace? Is the company known for career development, guidance and movement? When I was asking these questions about NextEra Energy, the company really stood out on all fronts. I was excited about the mission and impressed by the level of talent, technical know-how and the innovative spirit NextEra Energy employees display on a daily basis. I observed the way employees engage and challenge one another. And the company's reputation is second to none in the community and in the industry, which can affect your own reputation and the opportunities that open up outside of work.



The Power Source

Igniting the Future of Florida

In your role, communication, and ability to form trust and credibility are critical. What advice do you give to young professionals about networking and collegiality?

A strong network is critical, but the key to strong networks is that they must be valuable to both parties. Your network is a useful lever when you've already built a strong track record of success. That's table stakes. Once you've built a reputation for adding value and an ability to consistently produce, networks become instrumental for professional and personal growth as well as successfully executing your company's goals. They also provide another mechanism to learn and challenge yourself – especially if you find the right mentors internally and externally.

With your new added responsibilities within a larger organization, how do you prioritize personal opportunities and wellness?

Personally, I find a lot of value in cooking healthy meals for my family. My goal is to cook dinner for my family at least 2-3 times per week. I don't always meet that goal, but it's important to me to teach and reinforce the importance of healthy eating and taking the time to connect.

Speaking of connection, I'm also a proponent of tech breaks. I frequently require my family to put our phones in a designated place – whether in a basket or on the counter – so we can play a board game, connect over dinner or just have a five-minute family meeting. Putting down our phones to take advantage of living in Florida is also important. We love to do things outside.

Based upon your own personal experiences in your profession, what has been the biggest challenge you have faced or lesson you have learned?

Say yes. I really can't think of an opportunity I've ever said no to and that's helped me broaden and deepen skillsets in ways I never would have had the opportunity to improve upon otherwise. Being open to every opportunity is also a great way to be more purposeful about your development and career goals and supports the expansion of your network. I've been in many enjoyable roles where I'm learning a lot and encountering challenges I want to tackle. Then I've said yes to new opportunities that seemed completely tangential at the time, but those opportunities prompted me to do something totally different. For instance, I didn't have HR in my line of sight early in my career, but there are projects and assignments I said yes to that helped prepare me for my current role.

What advice would you give the 2nd year college student looking for a career within the energy industry?

Apply for an internship. I worked or had an internship every year starting in high school. Interning is the best way to quickly experience an industry and find out if it's for you. You will get to develop a point-of-view on how a business works and how it fits within the economy. It's also a great way to gauge whether you need to adjust your track in school to open up opportunities that maybe you weren't familiar with before your internship. And don't forget to apply early – internships fill up quickly.