the Register

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• IN THIS ISSUE •

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Ronald N. York, RFC®, NJ

New International Members

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Indonesia	33
Macau	13
Taiwan	33

Members Who Recommended New Members

Referror of the Month
Mark J. Byelich, RFC®

Mark J. Byelich, RFC®, PA
Charles A. Lambert, RFC®, NJ

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MDRT Experience
February 9-11, 2012, Bangkok

Business Owner Consulting Workshop
February 9, 2012, Middletown, OH

IARFC Board Meeting
February 10, 2012, Middletown, OH

Business Owner Consulting Workshop
February 16, 2012, Tampa, FL

Business Owner Consulting Workshop
April 4, Saint George, UT

Business Owner Consulting Workshop
April 19, 2012, Middletown, OH

Business Owner Consulting Workshop
April, 2012, Manila

IARFC CE @ Sea™
Bermuda (Holland America, msVeendam) May 20-27, 2012

MDRT Annual Meeting
June 10-13, 2012, Anahem, CA

IDA 9th Worldwide Chinese Congress -
August 9-12, 2012, Sydney, Australia

The IARFC is proud of our members and in reverence we would like to remember our passing members:

Robert K. Jennings
Sacramento, CA

David J. McClatchie
Westport, CT

Donald M. Morton
Ponderay, ID

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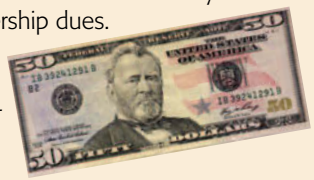

Please nominate one or two financial professionals who may be interested in the honor and benefit of acquiring the RFC® or RFA® designation. By providing prospective member names, you are granting your permission to mention your name as our source, and you will be eligible for the reward.

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From the
Chairman's Desk…

Recognize Challenges

Marketing Still Counts. Most IARFC members have survived the continued turmoil of 2011, and some have made noteworthy progress. We are still in economic doldrums, and there is a common obsession with political developments, distracting the citizens and RFC members. Those who favor the projects, legislation and regulations adopted by President Obama are concerned that he may be defeated or lose congressional control later this year, and that his measures will be undone. Those who have been displeased with his administration are equally concerned there will not be a change in control to revert those steps and return to our prior course.

No matter which way the elections go, there are important moves that you as a practitioner should be exposing to your clients. You want to protect their interests, **as they perceive them**. You also want to preserve all your client relationships, and add more high caliber clients. If you are not growing, then inflation is eating into the valuable equity of your firm or practice. It is not unlike what you tell your clients — the net revenue increase must exceed the rate of inflation. For you as a practitioner, this is complicated because practice growth often requires an upgrade of staffing, and even new technology, furnishings or office location.

But you cannot be like an ostrich and place your head in the sand. You must recognize the challenges and move forward. One technique is quite simple, and very effective. Make a list of ten items you would like to improve this year. Be reasonable here, not "pie in the sky" projects. You have ten months remaining in the year. Re-arrange that list into the most logical order. Then, for March — devote a bit of time every day on that project or enhancement. You may not get full resolution, but you will have made noteworthy progress. On April first, switch to the next item.

Financial Diversification. This is getting more attention, and you should definitely start reading and planning the best ways to offer this type of service. It can be valuable to your clients and extremely profitable for you. Some clients view this as Asset Protection, and that is very suitable for professionals who can be bankrupted by a malpractice lawsuit. That also applies to financial consultants.

One very ethical RFC suggested his clients invest a small portion of their portfolio into medical notes. When the firm offering these instruments went under, the plaintiff attorneys descended on him. They advertised locally to secure clients, and filed suits against the broker dealer and the RFC. Yes, he had E&O insurance, but the amount of coverage was not enough, plus he had to retain personal counsel. While all this was transpiring, he lost clients and was distracted by the negativity, and discontinued his periodic seminars. Revenue plummeted!

Soon he was facing bankruptcy himself, and wished that he had parked some of his money outside the easy access of plaintiff attorneys. It looks as if he will avoid the bankruptcy. However, he will be broke, his practice has shriveled, his income is reduced, and his personal life has been stressed. He had a tough choice: surrender most of his retirement plan proceeds and avoid bankruptcy, or keep the funds protected, but deal with the impact of being a bankrupted financial advisor.

Plan for Yourself. What are you doing to protect your own assets from avaricious attorneys or government regulators? You think it cannot happen to you?

Another RFC member built his practice by developing several financial counselors, who were independent contractors. Their portion of the plan fees, AUM fees and product commissions was accounted for and scrupulously paid to them. But the local state claimed these were statutory employees. These counselors used firm business cards, offices, computers, software and followed up with the prospects generated at his seminars. The amount of back taxes, fees, penalties and interest was staggering. The state attracted participation of the federal regulators. If he lost, he would be out of business and broke.

I am pleased to report that he won his battles — but the legal fees were horrendous. Only part of the legal expenses was covered, because failure to report wages and contribute all the taxes and withholdings can be a felony, and E&O does not cover that. What if he had lost? Did he have some of his assets outside the reach of the regulators and courts? No! That is why he was in a state of panic for two years.

Reach Out to the Wealthy. There are many persons who want to protect themselves and their family from these risks. Maybe they are unhappy with the political and social direction of the country. Maybe they have been disturbed by media reports. It does not matter what commences their motivation. They need and want help. They will pay for this service. And they will shift some of their investments into a venue that is protected and profitable for you.

Enjoy Deductible Travel. You can accompany your clients to offshore events and direct them to meetings and personal conferences. You guide the client and provide the entire fact finding. You will incur deductible expenses. You will have personal earnings or reimbursements. Those can be channeled for your maximum benefit and soon you are practicing exactly what you preach.

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Speaker, Jay Hinrichs
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True Wholesale Houses is the only truly fully managed product available today for the conservative Investor who is looking for an alternate investment. This predictable passive income, is backed by positive cash flow rental properties located in the absolute best rental markets in the United States!

As investors and investment advisors are looking for diversification in their client's portfolios, TWH offers a very safe secure entry into the real estate rental market. TWH's fully managed rental portfolio pays monthly dividends of 7% to 9%. Minimum investments start at $35,000, and include 50% of the current and future equity upon liquidation of the asset. Cash flow and equity are all fully managed!

Jay Hinrichs, Managing Owner of TWH is uniquely qualified to provide investors with this truly "one of a kind" fully managed investment. Jay is both a licensed Mortgage Banker in the State of Oregon as well as, a licensed Real Estate Broker in the States of Oregon, California and Mississippi.

The economy, not only nationally, but world-wide has created the investment opportunity of a lifetime!

Real estate historically has been an excellent investment. What we are experiencing is a continuation of the perfect storm for the real estate investor that wishes to invest at the bottom of the market cycle as opposed to investing with the herd at the top of the market (as was the case throughout the mid 2000's).

The basic fundamentals of investing in income producing properties in the best markets in the Country have never been better in comparison with cash flow to acquisition prices.

TWH allows its investors an opportunity to get in on the Foreclosure Market with a team of season Real Estate Investors that have well over 100 years combined experience in the real estate cash flow business.

With the lack of liquidity in the real estate market today, over 50% of all transactions that are taking place now are bought with cash. This fact has put increased downward pressure on pricing. Combining this with the Banks and Lenders still working through a backlog of foreclosures, creates the opportunity for these incredible buys to be with us for the next 24 to 36 months. The future will look very different as well, once these sub-prime and stated loan foreclosures have worked through the system. Considering 50% of all properties are being sold for cash and those few that are being purchased through conventional financing are with the current stringent underwriting criteria, and the fact that the British, Australian, Chinese and Canadians right now are buying 20% of all investment properties In the United States, the future foreclosure market will drastically be reduced to pre crisis levels, if not lower. As that pendulum swings in the next 3 to 7 years we should see prices rise back up to at least replacement cost values (much higher in certain areas).

The base economics for the TWH model of course, is rental income. In our markets the rents have not only been stable, they have increased over the past five years and are projected to stay level or rise as much as 5% per year. In certain markets, we are enjoying the strongest rental market of the last 20 years. Combine this with the lack of new construction and the population stabilizing or growing, the rental market will remain very strong and predictable. Our portfolio runs at a 95% occupancy rate.

The TWH model is, exceptional in its simplicity for the Investor as well as, protection of capital and assurance of a continued passive cash flow.

During the recent real estate crisis, Hinrichs had first-hand experience with many individuals that had invested in cash flow rentals on their own. These investors had experiences that got caught up in bad management. They did not have the time and/or experience to really be in the rental house business and the managing of rental properties. The idea that one can buy rental properties and sit back in their easy chair collecting cash flow is a misnomer in Hinrichs' mind. An investor that goes it alone must engage with property management. This is what fosters negative investment experiences. It was with this first-hand experience of seeing many investor fail at owning rentals that Hinrichs created what TWH believes is the new paradigm for foreclosure purchasing and rehab with long-term rental management.

Hinrichs determined that given this unprecedented opportunity, TWH needed to create a transaction that the passive cash flow investor could embrace and have confidence in. So to that end, TWH created a team that handles all aspects of the transaction — from acquisition of the foreclosure asset to rehab and management. This team unlike other turn-key type companies are true owners of the company and asset. There are no third party vendors for these critical aspects of managing the asset.

"I just had far too many clients literally lose their properties because of property management issues from constant maintenance calls to vacancy to turning of tenants", states Hinrichs.

TWH has created an investment model unlike any in the single family rental arena. The heart of the transaction is that the investor is brought into the transaction as the bank. Really stronger than any bank, as our Investor comes in at the price the bank is wholesaling the asset. It is the selling bank that has taken the loss, which in turn is our positive equity day one. TWH remains the owner of the

asset. The investor owns 100% of the First Deed of Trust. The Deed of Trust will carry a 7% to 9% interest rate depending on the property and an Equity Participation Clause that calls for a split of the equity above the Note investment 50-50. The TWH Investor receives the best of both worlds. They receive monthly passive income as well as, equity! The investor as the bank has no liability like an owner of the asset would have. In addition, it is one investor, one property.

The investor leverages off of the 30 plus years of experience of TWH in buying and rehabbing foreclosures. The management team is included in the TWH 50% equity. That is what creates the team that is fully vested in the property.

The TWH model is truly a win-win for all parties! It is TWH's goal to build monthly passive cash flow (which we do through the rental income) and build up equity for TWH (which we do through the Equity Participation Clause in the Note). The TWH investor simply picks a property, i.e. Promissory Note. The transaction is very streamlined compared to a typical real estate purchase. The investor will sign a Note Purchase Agreement. The closing is handled by a National Title Insurance Company. The investor receives; Title Insurance, the Original Note, and an Assignment of Deed of Trust and is the Loss Payee on the Hazard Insurance. In fact, anyone that has gotten a mortgage in the last 20 years has probably been an unknowing participant in this type of transaction. Most likely, when your loan closed on your home about 60 days later you got a letter from your lender stating that your loan had been sold and another company would be now servicing this loan.

For all of the above reason, the TWH Investment is well suited for SEPP, IRA, Self Directed 401k and especially a Roth IRA. For the Investor this is a onetime investment. There is never a cash call. The return is predictable. As opposed to owning the asset on their own where the investor is guaranteed of cash calls over the life of the investment and the return is unpredictable.

With the price points that we currently enjoy for these assets, the transactions have very large cash flow safety margins. The DCR "Debt Coverage Ratio's" are 2 to 4 times the payments to the investors. TWH is able to maintain a substantial reserve on each property thereby assuring monthly payments and adequate funds for on-going maintenance. What is commonly seen in the industry is other companies are selling foreclosures and rehabs and they are grossly understating fixed operational costs and other factors. With a portfolio of over 500 properties, we KNOW what it takes to run the properties and to keep them in tip-top shape and leased. Our success is our Investor's success!

Jay Hinrichs

Jay Hinrichs and TWH Partner, **Michael Hanks** will be on the IARFC Cruise to Bermuda and will be presenting the TWH Model.

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Achieving Sales Goals

Why Some Do and Some Don't

As salespeople, we were all taught to set sales goals, and told that by doing so we would sell more, make more money, and reach the top of our profession.

If you are reading this as a salesperson, past or present, I want to ask you — has that promise come true for you?

Yes? No?

For most people the answer is no, or at least not completely. I can say this with certainty because I know thousands of salespeople who have set sales goals and only a few who have consistently achieved all of their goals.

Please read on to discover why sales goals often fail to work, and keep reading for a method that can make anyone consistently achieve even the most difficult sales goals.

Let's start by understanding why sales goals don't work for most people.

On day one of any sales training class or in the first chapter of any sales book you read, you are taught that in order to find success in sales you must set your goals. While this advice is correct, it is at the same time very incomplete and fails to reveal the real reason that goals sometimes work, and why they often don't.

An entire industry has been created around goal setting with the promise that salespeople can sell more by setting better goals using better methods. The problem is that none of these traditional methods address the reasons why goal setting just does not work for most people. While some of these traditional methods may work better than others may, the truth is that goal setting works better for some people than for others, regardless of the method. It is the characteristics of the individual that cause goal setting to work or not, and that is the variable we need to consider.

To understand how to make goal setting an effective means to your success we need to take a close look at the relatively small group of people for whom goal setting works like magic in achieving their desired outcomes. From these people, we can discover the missing secret to achieving sales goals by examining what certain characteristics they possess that others don't. Once we know what those characteristics, are we can begin to make the changes in ourselves that will cause us to achieve that same high level of sales success.

The secret of people who achieve their sales goals.

There are two characteristics or abilities that those who consistently reach their sales goals have that most people do not:

1. The ability to convince themselves that their sales goals are a reality even before they are achieved.

2. The ability to maintain a laser-like focus on their sales goals until they are achieved, prioritizing their goals above all other things.

The reality is that a relatively small number of people have the natural ability to both.

Let's look a little deeper into these characteristics.

For a goal to motivate its own achievement, it must be believed to be a pending reality in the subconscious mind, and not just a possibility that may occur. If it is believed to be an absolute certainty, then the effort required to achieve it will be motivated by the certainty of the outcome. If the achievement of the goal is believed to be uncertain, then the effort applied to achieve it will reflect that uncertainty, and usually be insufficient.

The difference is exemplified in the following two patterns of thought:

1. *"I am the top sales person in my organization; all I have to do is do the right things every day."*

2. *"If I do the right things every day I will become the top sales person in my organization."*

Characteristics of Salespeople

The first pattern is characteristic of goal achievers, and the second defines those who fail to reach their sales goals. The problem is, most people are naturally oriented or conditioned toward that second pattern where the achievement of the goal is uncertain- as embodied in the use of the word 'if'. In this case, the outcome is seen as the product of, or dependent on, the effort. In contrast, the goal achiever expresses the outcome with certainty and in the present tense as if it has already occurred. He has no doubt of the reality of the outcome, and the effort is the product of, or dependent on, the belief in that outcome.

The second characteristic of goal achievers is their ability to focus on the goal and prioritize it above all else. So often sales people set sales goals only to lose focus on those goals well before they are achieved. Perhaps this has been the case with you and your sales goals. The goal had your attention when it was first set, but soon became lost among other priorities. While it was still important, it was not your focus. For goal achievers the goal remains the number one priority and focus in their life until it is achieved, never falling out of focus

despite all of the possible distractions that life can bring.

Now that you know the characteristics that separate goal achievers from those who set goals that they never achieve, let's look at a surprisingly simple technique that anyone can use to achieve all of their goals. If you weren't born with the characteristics of the natural goal achievers, don't worry, this technique will make you every bit as effective in achieving your sales goals. It just takes a little time and effort.

How anyone can achieve their sales goals.

First, we are going to set a goal, but a little bit differently then you may be used to. For natural goal achievers, the method is not very important, but for the vast majority of us setting goals in the way I'm going to teach you will allow you to gain the advantages of natural goal achievers.

For this goal setting exercise, you will need a pen and paper.

1. Start with what you want to achieve. **I want to earn $200,000 in the next 12 months**

2. Now imagine the moment that you achieve it. Close your eyes and see yourself at the very moment that it becomes a reality. Picture it like a movie scene complete with sights, sounds, and emotions. Really immerse yourself in the scene; see the people, notice how you feel, think the thoughts you would have in that moment about yourself and the people in your life.

We need to do this because your mind works in sensory impressions, not words. Just think of the last newspaper you read: You can remember the pictures, but can you see what the words are?

3. Write down that scene in 6 to 10 sentences. Keep in mind that your goal-setting scene can be a little vague. This just allows room for your mind to fill in the details with an outcome even better than you imagined and doesn't limit you to only one possible version of success.

   I'm sitting at my desk at the end of June, 2012 looking at my commission statement for the last 12 months. At the bottom of the page is printed the figure $200,000 which represents my commissions over that period of time. I set the paper down, lean back in my chair, and reflect on all the hard work and smart decisions that brought me to this point. I smile and put my hands behind my head, allowing myself a well-deserved moment of complete relaxation and enjoyment of my accomplishment. I think of my family and the opportunities and lifestyle I can now provide for them. I look forward to being even more successful in the year to come.

Once you have written out the first draft, continue to revise it until it sounds just right.

4. Now I'm going to ask you to do something with your written goal scene. But, before I do, I want to ask you to pay careful attention to your reaction to what I am telling you.

Write out your goal scene 100 times. What was your reaction?

If you are like most people, your reaction was something along the lines of, "One hundred times! That will take forever! Are you kidding me?"

That you had this reaction indicates to your subconscious mind that the effort required to realize the goal is not worth the effort, and that it is not really that important. This is the thinking that has likely held you back from achieving your sales goals in the past and the exact opposite of the thought characteristics of goal achievers.

This is not to say that if you have these thought patterns you are not successful and have not achieved things in your life, just that those achievements came harder than they had to and fell short of what you could have made possible in your life without them. Fortunately, you can reverse these patterns by writing your goals scene 100 times.

Why This Will Make Your Sales Goals a Reality

Writing out your sales goals scene 100 times will give you the advantages that natural goal achievers already have: The ability to convince their subconscious mind of the reality of the goal before it manifests, and the ability to prioritize the focus on the goal above all other things.

Because it is a scene rather than a traditional statement of intent, your mind can see it happening and believe that it is real because it has all the details of something that really happens to you. When it is believed absolutely by the subconscious, your mind will generate the motivation and actions to make the belief a reality.

The repetition makes the goal a priority because each time you write your scene it creates an impression on your mind. After 100 repetitions it becomes the dominate impression, which tells your mind that it is more important than anything else. This gives your sales goals the primary focus and constant attention from your mind that is needed to achieve it.

If you are still thinking something like, will 50 repetitions work or maybe I can just read it 100 times, you have already limited your outcome. Fortunately, you can turn yourself boldly in the direction of your goals by committing to this practice and sending a message of high achievement directly into your mind where it will fuel the achievements you always dreamed of.

This article is far from a complete discussion of the mechanics of achievement. For more information, you can learn from the masters such as Joe Vitale and Stuart Lichtman.

Jon Gilge is President of Sales GIANT Training, providing sales training and motivation to professional salespeople and sales managers through audio programs, seminars, coaching, and keynote speeches.

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About Checks and Balances TV…

Checks and Balances TV is a weekly television program designed to educate consumers about the financial world they live in and assist them in making informed decisions regarding their financial future. It features financial expert Matthew J. Rettick, America's "Man with the Plan," as the host.

During this unprecedented time in America's economic history, unbiased and truthful financial advice is desperately needed. Our nation is in the midst of a financial fiasco and consumers need help to regain control of their personal financial future. The economic hardships the country is experiencing has brought confusion, chaos and crises to the nation. Americans have turned to so-called experts for guidance, only to be misguided and further confused. This misinformation has pulled them further away from their ultimate goal of obtaining a financially secure retirement. Who is really taking a public and unbiased role to help Americans make the correct financial decisions to stay on the right track towards financial freedom and retirement success? Matthew J. Rettick is, America's "Man with the Plan."

Now is not the time to be timid or shy about finances, nor is it a time to rely on financial "authorities" that are uneducated, uninterested or unqualified to explain the effects the economy has had on consumers' pocketbooks. Rettick, the host of *Checks and Balances TV*, is a financial insider who is passionate about helping consumers set themselves free from the economic undertakings that are hindering their financial freedom and educating them on what they can do to get back on track financially. He has taken a public position to provide "true" comprehensive advice to consumers nationwide as well as educate and assist advisors with recognizing the value and importance of comprehensive advising versus offering just a single product or solution.

Checks and Balances TV is a platform where consumers and advisors everywhere can readily access detailed, unbiased financial information to aid them in planning for a successful financial future. The weekly Internet television program is designed to inspire Americans to get up, get energized and get going on their way to financial freedom and retirement success. It was also created with independent financial advisors in mind. Rather than having one-sided information about a particular product or strategy like so many other financial information sources, or a sales-driven message, CBTV addresses the pros and cons of each financial topic, which can help their clients get the balanced information they need to make informed financial decisions.

Checks and Balances TV helps viewers make sense of current financial headlines on a weekly basis and provides balanced insight and unbiased advice to aid them in making informed decisions regarding their savings and investments. At the same time, advisors can utilize the show, along with the supporting tools and resources found on the site, as an extension of their financial advice. Advisors can gain comfort in referring their clients and prospects to CBTV as it offers supporting resources and information that complement their services, presenting balanced insight from the perspective of a fellow independent advisor.

Rettick has always been a consumer advocate. He designed *Checks and Balances TV* to address the concerns and questions that consumers may have regarding personal finance, not to drive them to any one specific solution or product. CBTV is meant to encourage a well-rounded, educational approach to financial planning through an entertaining and informative format. However, Rettick also knows the challenges of financial advising and the common misconceptions advisors face. His mission is to correct misinformation by providing a comprehensive platform that can be trusted. He strives to teach everyone by offering facts and educational information about finance, addressing the broader spectrum of solutions and products to allow people to properly plan for longevity and be prepared for the future.

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When Ticks Outnumber Dogs

A new year is upon us. What should we expect from the investment environment in 2012? Over the past several years, the stock markets have been transformed from markets to casinos, from investing to gambling, and from skill to fortune. Central bank intervention and manipulation has morphed into domination and control. We have witnessed, and continue to witness, a profound change in the way our economy functions. We must adapt or we shall perish. If there is one fundamental difference that distinguishes today from decades passed, it is this. Going forward, I believe the key theme will be that the ticks now outnumber the dogs. Let me explain.

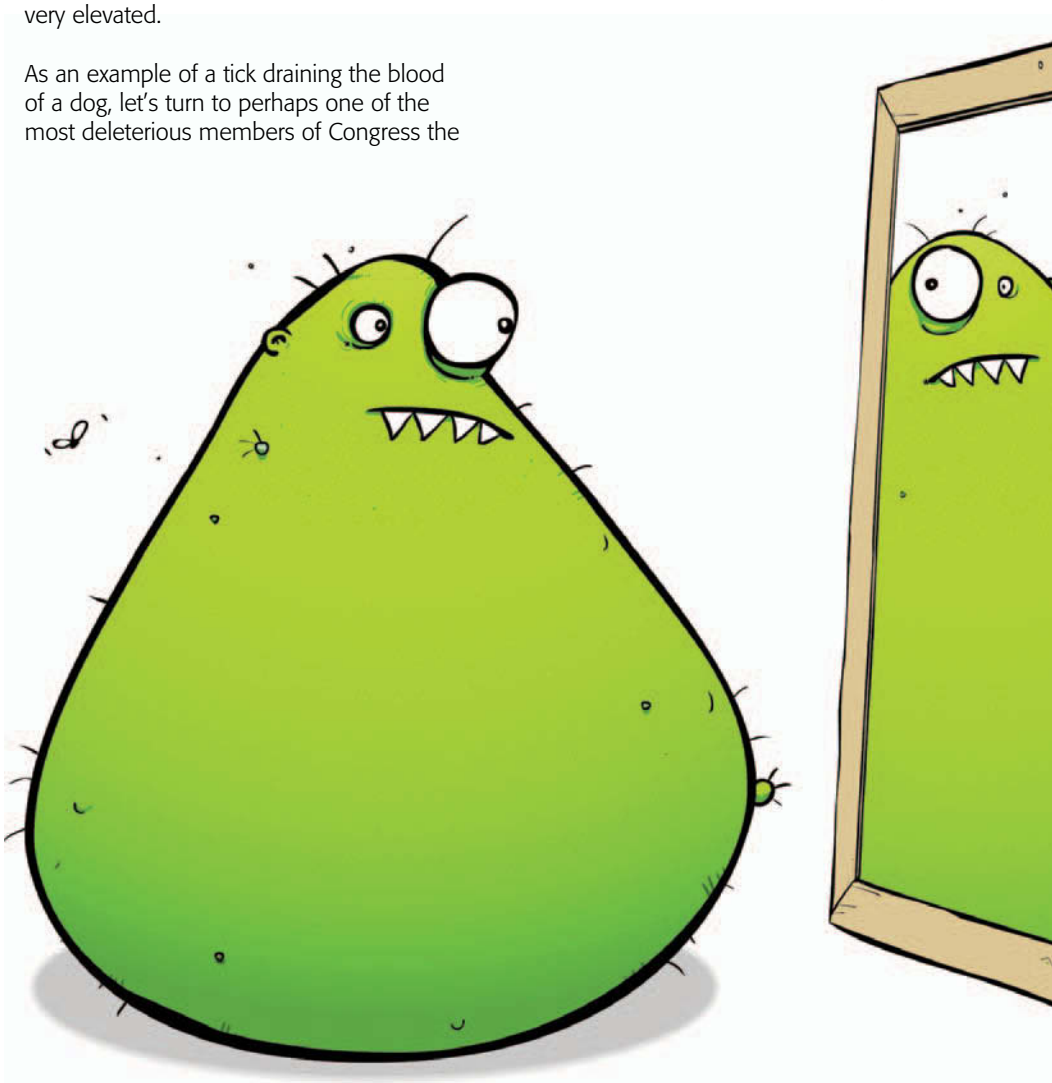
Ticks are parasitic blood sucking arachnids. Their existence is dependent upon latching on to another animal with a blood circulation. We humans can be targets but our dog friends are especially vulnerable to attack. Ticks find a victim, burrow into the epidermis, suck until they are engorged, drop off, digest, and repeat. This is now the story of our existence as it pertains to our governments. We are the dog. They are the tick. There are more of them than us. Their goal is to bleed us dry. There is now an adversarial relationship between the governed and the governors.

That may sound harsh but consider this. Personally, I'm not the least bit afraid of the Taliban. I'm not the least bit afraid of Al-Qaeda. I'm not afraid of any Iranian citizen or Afghan citizen or any other citizen of the world. I'm not afraid to fly on an airplane anywhere absent all security measures. However, I am afraid of the US government. Check that, I am terrified of agents of the current regime. I am terrified of the SEC and the IRS. Since members of Congress are passing new legislation to give the military the right to imprison me without due process, legal representation, or charge, I am becoming terrified of the US military. As Thomas Jefferson once said, 'When the government is fearful of the people, you have liberty. When the people are fearful of the government, you have tyranny.' Government does not produce anything. The people do. The people produce goods and commerce and thereby supply the circulation of blood through the economy. The government serves itself to extract that blood at will. But first, they must be given the power to do so. Using threats of terror, default, foreclosure, and credit contraction, the governors have extracted surrender from the governed. There are more of them than us. How do we then deal with regime tyranny?

Before readers assess my level of paranoia, please remember that as a small business owner in the U.S. neither the Taliban nor Al-Qaeda can bankrupt me, put me out of business, or imprison me. However, any number of U.S. government regulators can. Where am I going with all this? When the ticks outnumber the dogs, the dogs don't have a chance to prosper! For those of us with a pulse, it is hard to be optimistic about 2012 and beyond.

The truth is the investment environment is falling victim to more and more government regulation. Excessive regulation sucks the blood out of commerce and therefore constricts prosperity. Real wealth continues to be redistributed from the masses to the elite. The elite protect themselves with regulation. Investors and advisors must realize that we are now in an environment in which capital growth prospects are very limited while risk of capital losses are very elevated.

As an example of a tick draining the blood of a dog, let's turn to perhaps one of the most deleterious members of Congress the U.S. has had the misfortune to endure — Barney Frank. He and his buddies unleashed the so-named 'Dodd-Frank Act'on the public under the guise of 'financial reform'. Of its 5,230 pages of rules, not a single word addresses the ring leader of the real estate scam - Fannie Mae/ Freddie Mac. That's because these two institutions are part of the government. Ticks don't suck blood from each other. A more accurate assessment of the Frank Act is that it is more like a parasitic plague that devours commerce. Only a fourth of the plague has been implemented and it has already cost American businesses 20 million hours of paperwork and the financial industry alone has spent some $12 billion in compliance costs. With the average worker making less than $30,000 per year, that extra $12 billion in compliance expense equates to maybe a quarter of a million jobs that must be cut. Why does Barney hate us so much? Why is he trying to



destroy us? He is only getting started. Just in the first year of implementation, the GAO estimates that the federal government will need to hire 2,850 more ticks at a taxpayer expense of $1.3 billion. More ticks than dogs do not bode well for the dogs. What will be the goal of these extra ticks? To suck more blood from us working dogs. It will only get worse.

In part, the people that citizens elect to office are simply too stupid to fathom. For instance, the Governor in my home state is nicknamed 'Tax' because she is always talking about taxing any dog that dares to breathe. Just recently a good sized company announced it was moving to our state and do you know why they moved here? Take a wild one. Go ahead. Yep, the state offered tax incentives to reduce the company's tax bill. Low taxes foster business and jobs. Jobs produce tax revenue. How hard is this? Obviously our elected leaders are not on our side. They govern with enormous inconsistency. Their goal is not to govern but to rule.

Congress just passed the National Defense Authorization Bill by a 93 — 7 vote. Bush III (or the guy that sleeps in the White House) will no doubt sign it because his main goal apparently is to annul the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution used to be the law of our land in the U.S. and it had a little clause known as the Fifth Amendment. Basically this part of the document gave us all the right to legal representation if accused of an offense. That right has now been erased by the new law that says the military can be used to arrest us, hold us, imprison us, move us to any location in the world, keep us forever, and deny us any legal representation. The traitors in Congress just voted to render us subjects to the rule of the elite. As always, the honorable Mr. Ron Paul was one of the few elected representatives that actually tried to represent us with his courageous 'Nay' vote. The rest of them just put a knife in our back. The ticks have penetrated the epidermis. The blood is now flowing from us to them.

On a global stage, we all know the train wreck that is debt-choked Europe. Yet, just last year, ECB president, Trichet, was raising interest rates. Feel free to go down to Wal-Mart and buy a clue, fellow! U.S. regime leader Obama was over in Australia addressing their parliament in November 2011 and told them, and the world, that 'the U.S. was getting its fiscal house in order and cutting spending'. Oddly, the U.S. debt grew past the $15 trillion mark while Obama was speaking. To make things more mendacious, the Congressional Supper Committee (some people called them the 'super' committee but I think we all know that all they did was eat supper on the tax payer dime) could not agree to even a single dollar of spending cuts. But, Obama's statement did make my list of biggest Biblically Proportioned Lies ever told. (Cain is number one in lying to God's face about killing his brother Abel. Bernanke is number two from his 2007 speech in which he said it wasn't the central bank's responsibility or intent to bail anybody out for bad decisions. And now, Mr. Obama gets the number three spot!)

So, world leaders are completely incompetent, completely ignorant, and completely incapable of espousing the truth about anything. Their only solutions to anything are growing the government and grow the government's power. Unfortunately, the government relies on fresh blood from the working dogs for its existence. When the ticks outnumber the dogs, the sticks don't get fetched, the sheep don't get herded, the blind don't get led, and the poor old dog just gets drained of blood. So how does this affect investing prospects for the coming year, 2012?

Here are a few themes to consider:

Debt. Debt is now with us until the end of time and it is constricting the flow of blood to our heart. Our heart is commerce because commerce generates wealth opportunity. The current regime would like us to think that government creates wealth but we know that to be yet another lie. Profitable commerce produces wealth but profits are constrained when the debt service becomes destructive. The U.S. government will have to rollover nearly a trillion in maturing debt in 2012 (I may be rounding up by a few hundred billion) and it will also have to finance an additional trillion to satisfy the addiction to deficit spending. European Union members will need to roll over trillions in 2012 and big banks in both economies will be rolling trillions in debt as well. (Again, I may be rounded by hundreds of billions as the world's amassed debt has rendered a hundred billion to be a rather insignificant number.) This debt will not be paid down. It will not be retired. Why? Because the debt has not enhanced wealth nor has it been productive in any way to the masses who borrowed it. Somebody has to absorb all this new debt issuance. This will be capital that is fed to sovereign nations and big banks to maintain the illusion of wealth rather than capital that is fed into commerce to drive profits, jobs, and real wealth creation. The money of the world gets absorbed by unproductive governments before it ever gets into the hands of commerce. The end result will be a stagnant world economy dominated by the privileged pilfering the poor. If anything, debt will expand because it serves to enslave the populous.

Control. Ticks need dogs. Dogs don't need ticks. The ticks need to convince the dogs to allow the tick population to expand. The ticks need to convince the dogs to keep walking down the same trails so the ticks can have easy access to their prey. The threat of universally scorned boogeymen, natural catastrophes, and threats of financial collapse are all central to the argument of increasing the tick population. After all, the ticks don't add anything to the world of the dogs. The ticks have to live off the dogs. Therefore, the ticks must convince the dogs that regulating the fields in which the dogs play is best for the dogs. The goal of the central banks is to concentrate control into a very limited number of hands. Increasing the tick population increases regulations and regulators and serves to control the population. ECB President Mr. Draghi repeatedly said in public that the ECB's only role was to contain inflation through a stable currency. The ECB did not have the authority to bailout banks and legally could not lend money to sovereign nations. Of course, just this past week the ECB launched a $640 billion dollar bailout loan to the banks of the EU offered at 1% interest for 3 years. The ECB implied that the borrowing banks could then buy the debt of broke sovereign nations. In the end, the ECB will have more control and the sovereign nations will be formerly so, broke, and home to insolvent banks. How about that? The U.S. populace is always being told to be more like Europe. Now Europe wants to be just like us!

Latin. I don't claim to speak Latin. But, we are all familiar with the Latin that is printed on the Federal Reserve's money, 'E pluribus Unum'. The translation is 'Out of many, one'. We can debate the real meaning and significance of this phrase but we must all prepare for the new order that is unfolding in front of us. Central banks are busy trying to convince the populous to surrender and let the banks solve all the problems. In return for debt extensions, they may soon ask us all to convert currencies to just one - theirs. It may have the phrase, 'Ex multis unum' printed next to Bernanke's face. The translation is 'From many, now one'. This will reflect the end game where the central banks have played and cheated their way through the game of Monopoly and they now own all the properties and securities. Everything will then pass from the hands of

the populous to the hands of the central bankers. From many, now one.

Economic Enslavement. Here are a few sad statistics concerning America. First, more than half of Americans are now considered to be either impoverished or members of the lower income class. People like Barney Frank have been working for decades to destroy America. His efforts may finally be paying off. Second, the third quarter of 2011 brought forth a $2.3 trillion drop in net worth to Americans. The entire decline was due to stock prices eroding. Stock prices therefore are now central to the American wealth illusion. The majority of Americans don't own any stocks. Hence, most Americans are in the 'lower class'. As fewer Americans own fewer stocks and fewer houses, they find themselves more and more trapped in economic enslavement. They work just to pay their debts. While slaves appear to produce product at near non-existent wages, on the surface it would seem that the owners enjoy the prosperity. However, this is not real prosperity. Prisoners of war forced into slave labor camps were not only less productive but they sought ways to hamper progress. Since they didn't share in any productive rewards, they did not work as hard on their tasks. Less ownership will mean less productivity going forward. If too many ticks weight down the dog, he might not even get up off the porch.

Stocks. Stock prices are now set by central bankers and their trading desks. Stock valuations are driven by the hard work of the dogs. More ticks than dogs drain the blood and hard work from the dogs. As governments and their regulator arms grow, the dogs simply lose their productivity. It follows that stock values would then suffer. Innovation and creativity are critical to economic growth. If the ticks keep the dogs walking down the same trails every day, the dogs will not be free to explore different ideas. People like Barney Frank will continue to make the leash with which the ticks control the dog. The Fed will continue to keep the path clear for stock investors so the ticks will know where to congregate. Stock prices will move higher to keep the dogs moving. But, this is only a trick perpetrated by the central bankers so they can collect more blood.

Caution: Please do not read any further as this last piece might be a bit disturbing. *"Unthinking respect for authority is the greatest enemy of the truth".* That quote comes from Albert Einstein. What follows is my own observation, research, and complete disrespect for authority.

Heavy Metal. Black Sabbath's 'War Pigs' should be playing in the background with the amplification that the originators of heavy metal music deserve. But there is another kind of heavy metal. Chemtrails are chemical vapors spewed by aircraft with the intent of disbursing toxic heavy metals. Like we don't have enough to worry about already, heavy metals are absorbed into the human body through food, water, and air. Heavy metal toxicity symptoms are reduced mental and central nervous functions, lower energy levels, and damage to blood composition and vital organs. Longer term exposure leads to neurological degenerative processes that mimic Alzheimer's disease. Barium is a metal of choice and our skies are now streaked with jet vapors that linger long beyond the expected time of a contrail (exhaust condensation). Chemtrails laced with barium disburse into thin smoky clouds often pinkish in hue that produce color prisms like rainbows. An example can be found on my blog at http://bmfinvest.blogspot.com/2011/12/stocks-may-be-least-of-our-worries.html. Readers should investigate and monitor this from their own perspective. But, if the banks are making their final push, might they want to dumb us up a little bit and keep us confused to lessen resistance?

Barry M. Ferguson, RFC®

Barry M. Ferguson, RFC® is the President and founder of BMF Investments, Inc. an independent SEC registered Investment Advisory fee-based money management firm located in Charlotte, North Carolina. Barry has more than a decade's worth of experience in the financial services industry. He has a diverse background ranging from financial software consultant to registered representative of investment products to President of an Investment Advisory firm. His strong technology background has been beneficial in today's 'information age' market.

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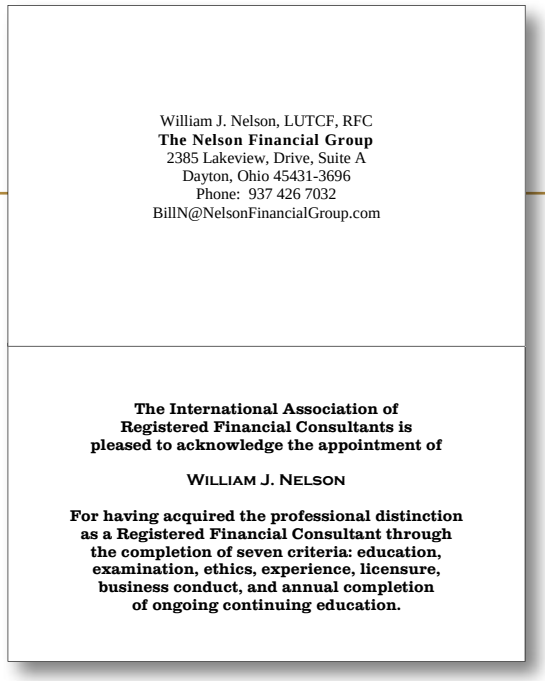
New RFC Announcement Card Order Form



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Craig J. Poeppelman

Opportunity for a New Level of Customer Service

In today's ever changing financial environment, objectivity is perhaps the most valuable commodity. We do not sell products, but rather provide advice on a retainer basis.

How did you first enter financial services?

I worked as a para-planner for Harper Associates while attending Ohio State in the mid 90's. My early job responsibilities included many of the back-office functions of a firm including taking out the trash! I wanted to get my foot in the door and was lucky enough to find a job opportunity through the student chapter of the Financial Planning Association, of which I was the secretary. At the time I was unsure of what the profession was actually about, so performing some of the menial tasks provided my first taste as to what financial planning was all about. More importantly I learned how to interact with clients and that each family or business situation was unique requiring customized solutions rather than boilerplate answers.

What was your educational background?

I graduated high school from a small/rural community and migrated to Ohio State in search of a degree in the business world. I had no idea what I was getting into when class sizes ballooned from 20 students to that of an auditorium comprising 750 students! Although I enjoyed the new learning environment, I quickly learned that corporate finance was not a passion. I felt like a more intimate connection was needed and my discovery of personal financial planning was a natural fit, which led to a bachelor's degree in Family Financial Management.

What were your early job duties?

While attending school and working with Harper Associates, my early job duties consisted of back office tasks that are vital to any investment advisory firm. After graduation and learning the "ins and outs" of the business, I developed a program in conjunction with Joe Harper that allowed me to build a practice from scratch. Because our firm is a two-man shop, I still perform many of the same back office functions as any small business owner would, but I also visit with clients, provide investment advice and install plans.

Were you successful at first?

Success is in the eye of the beholder and also depends on which benchmarks are used. I no doubt had my share of lumps out of the gate simply because I started on the ground floor. Establishing a fee-only practice can be a challenging endeavor and I scoured my network of friends and family for my first clients. Luckily, I did a decent job and people felt as if they could refer my name to others. Let's face it, the only place to go is up!

Laying the foundation for a fee-only practice is much different than that of a practice built on a commission platform. Revenue can be scarce in the first several years as relationships are fostered and strategies are implemented. I was lucky in a sense that I had one of the first fee-only planners in Columbus as a guide. Having the ability to fall back on his experience gave me the confidence and direction in which I needed to build a career for the long haul.

What or who influenced you the most?

This is a question I think of often. Undoubtedly Joe Harper has been the biggest influence on my professional career. As a fee-only planner in the Columbus, Ohio area since the early 1980's, he has helped to develop the platform from which I operate today.

He was there to give me the friendly nudge when I needed one. He also provided the guidance and patience to help a young person get started within the industry. We've worked side by side for close to 15 years. Without him I wouldn't enjoy the opportunities that are available to me today.

The practice is only one facet of my life and he has been there for me in other areas as well. We've shared in family functions and hunting trips. There has been the occasional beer and good laugh along the way. I'm lucky to still have him as a sounding board as I continue building my side of the practice and I'm proud to call him a friend.

What were your major obstacles?

The biggest obstacle that I faced was that of my age. New to the industry but fresh with knowledge, I found experience to be in short supply. Potential clients sensed this too. Luckily I was able to lean on Joe to fill in the gaps and my first several clients had to believe in this too.

Unfortunately I have seen the ups and downs of the markets including the expansion of the 90's, the technology bubble, 9/11 and the events of more recent years. The large market swoons have forced me to gain experience in dealing with all types of client situations. What once was a weakness (that is lack of experience)…is now an asset. Learning how to deal with adversity and helping clients cope with volatility comes with age and as they say, there is no substitute for experience.

Tell us about your current practice:

A lot of our practice revolves around investment management. We do hit the high points of other categories such as insurance and estate planning. However, we bring in experts to tend to those areas. I view my role as that of a quarterback helping to facilitate the necessary personnel to the proper positions on the field.

Our program is built on a fee-only platform. In today's ever changing financial environment, objectivity is perhaps the most valuable commodity. We do not sell product,s but rather provide advice on a retainer basis. This eliminates many of the hidden conflicts of interest that can surface and have been a part of our industry for so long. Transparency is a hallmark of our shop. Clients know what they are getting for their money and everything is on the table for monitoring. Most clients appreciate this approach and feel comfortable in knowing what their costs are in connection to our services.

I feel that I provide highly personalized unbiased service, which enables clients to achieve their goal of greater financial security.

How do you market now to acquire new clients?

Most of my business is based on referrals. I have done the traditional print advertising but leads always seem to come through word of mouth and networking. I have joined several networking groups over the last several years and all have produced business to some extent. The power of networking is often overlooked for more traditional advertising means. I contend that if one pours 100% of their resources (e.g., time and money) into networking, they will have better results than through conventional avenues.

At the end of the day the best marketing tool that I have is a satisfied client. They are more likely to talk about my services and know how my practice operates. Anytime I run across a prospect, I encourage them to call a current client and discuss my practice. I have nothing to hide and feel like my services are worth discussing.

Over and above referral programs, I have worked with editors in search of financial content for local newspapers. They appreciate fresh ideas and often need to fill space. Published articles also demonstrate the expert factor that prospective clients desire in a planner.

What are your major frustrations?

One bad apple can ruin it for the rest. One of the biggest frustrations I have is dealing with the negative repercussions of a financial scandal within our ranks. Fortunately they are few and far between but when a fellow advisor makes waves due to fraudulent activity, the rest of us are left to deal with the negative spin.

Countless times I have had clients inquire about an advisor misdeed they have read about in the newspaper or seen on television. Overcoming this obstacle is an unfortunate task we all have to undertake in an effort to keep our good names intact. A breach of fiduciary duty is the ultimate sin in our business and discussing these issues with clients is often a necessity. I use these occurrences to educate clients on the responsibilities that each of them have to ensure that their investments are safe from negligence and theft.

Tell us about your business continuation plan?

The continuation plan in our office is constantly evolving. Both of us have no plans of going in a different direction anytime soon, but we do have a game plan in place for emergencies. We consult on each other's clientele knowing the generalities of a particular situation with most of this taking place behind the scenes. If an emergency should surface that requires a prolonged absence or worse, the remaining planner would be responsible for helping the other's clients to a landing spot, be it as a continued relationship with the firm or someplace else. The road map we have in place has the best interests of the clients at heart and this has been clearly communicated to them.

What feature of benefit of the IARFC has been of greatest value?

One of the greatest benefits I derive from the IARFC is that of sharing practice tips with colleagues. I enjoy the *Register* and the timely information it delivers. Although we are all doing some of the same things from a practice standpoint, I am constantly learning of more efficient ways to perform tasks. The network of advisors that comprise the IARFC are special individuals who are attentive to detail. The *Register* reflects the ideals of our association and I find it to be of great value among other benefits that the membership provides.

What do you see for the Association in the future?

Obviously Ed Morrow and others have done a great job of expanding the association well beyond our country's borders. As the business world continues its integration around the globe I envision an even more diverse membership. Diversity has its advantages in new ideas and a renewed effort toward developing a brand in which we can all lean on and leverage.

I have been a member of the IARFC since 2002 and have noticed the footprint of our organization getting bigger by the day. This will continue well into the future and each of us can play a small role in making this happen by the communications we have with clients and colleagues.

What should financial advisors be doing to give back to the community?

Providing an opportunity to enhance financial literacy within the ranks of our youth can be one way of giving back to the community. I have partnered with my high school's economic teacher to develop a program that discusses the very basics of investing and how the markets can affect many aspects of one's life. I have received positive feedback from citizens within the community that this type of education is often undervalued in today's climate.

We have added a degree of fun to the curriculum by developing a stock picking contest that allows students to invest in the market with simulated portfolios. I have found that students are eager to learn about some of the issues that they will face upon graduation and entrance into the real world. As an elective course we have seen attendance increase each year as the word spreads among students. I suspect that some of this has to do with the content we are discussing, but the prizes I sponsor for the winning team might be a factor as well!

What will be the impact of technology on financial advisors?

Technology seems like it comes in waves. Although I have only been in the planning field since the late 1990's, I can recall the days of telephone trades, fax machines and the old filing cabinet. Like most we have converted our office to a mainly electronic format, but we've had our headaches along the way. The latest evolution seems to be with apps for the various handheld devices. Several large brokerages now provide apps for their trading platforms and we have sat down with clients to set these programs up on their iPad or phone.

With electronic filing and push technology, I now have the ability to access client files on the road directly from my cell phone. Gone are the days of having to be in the office to do one's job. I can go anywhere and securely search client data, which provides an opportunity for a new level of customer service.

On an institutional level we are now using an advisor site to manage client accounts directly from the iPad. I expect that we're only scratching the service of these new technologies and at some point not too long from now we'll say, "Remember the days of trading on our desktop computer!"

What do you advise an RFC to concentrate on?

Specialize in something rather than being the jack of all trades. Focusing on a target market can lead to opportunities you have never thought imaginable. Too often a message can get lost in a broad-comprehensive approach. Developing a niche and becoming an expert in that particular area will lead to new clients.

Think of someone that does one thing particularly well. Be it a sports figure or movie star, they become the "go-to" person in that field. Financial planning does not have to be any different.

What's looming on the horizon for our profession?

Perhaps the biggest issue we will face as an industry is that of transparency. At some point I firmly believe that all commissions will have to be disclosed to the client. There seems to be an industry push for full disclosure, regulatory bodies will demand it and consumer advocates will no doubt have their say. Getting out in front of the curve would be the best approach. Full disclosure of fees and commissions will level the playing field for all involved parties and provide a platform that can help to minimize fraud within our industry.

What do you wish you had done, early in your career?

I wish I had focused on marketing to a target audience rather than transmitting a broad message. A refined approach may have allowed me to penetrate certain areas of the market more quickly. There are many different ways of spreading the word about my brand and I failed at this task out of the gate. Of course, much of this is live and learn but I had been advised of this at the outset and failed to follow sound advice. Call it stubborn or call it plain dumb, but I wish I had refined my message early on.

What have you done to create a reputation in your professional practice?

One of the biggest items a planner can focus on is that of customer service. Let's face it, there are literally thousands of people out there doing exactly the same thing as me. Typically when I take on a new client, it is because he or she is frustrated from a previous advisor experience. Service is paramount in today's financial planning field. Clients expect "bang for their buck" and when they feel a need is not being met, they are apt to look elsewhere.

My entire practice is focused on customer service and timely communication. I return phone calls promptly and reply to emails on the go with an iPhone or iPad. This most especially rings true in a difficult financial environment, which has been the case for the last several years. People expect results, but demand conversation. Our profession must get back to the basics of customer service. Too often we get wrapped up in the markets and the 24 hour news cycle. It is our job to let people know that the customer comes first. This approach will not only lead to new clients, but also protect the current customer base, which has taken years to build.

Developing a reputation for dependability and timely communication is what my clients have come to depend on and I'm proud to say that I have worked hard at focusing on customer service. In a world of instant communication and boilerplate documents, crafting a personal message is the best advice I could give to fellow a planner.

What one piece of advice would you give to someone just getting started in the financial planning field?

Don't give up! Starting out in any job can be difficult and some days are better than others. Learning how to manage the highs and lows are an important part of a long term plan. There will be a day when you land a new client. There will inevitably be that day when you are told your services are no longer needed. Don't take it to heart and do your best to learn from the

experience. Is there something you could have done differently? Can you implement something in the future to achieve a more desirable outcome?

Never stop evolving!

What do you do maintain an organized approach to your office?

I am a big believer in technology to organize and maintain an organized office space. I use a variety of products that are integrated to help bring my office into the field. Devices such as an iPhone, iPad and laptop are great because they allow you to access documents securely from any place in the world.

Having the convenience of being able to access client information on the go allows flexibility in my work schedule and the ability to deliver timely information to the people that need it the most: my clients.

What is the best piece of advice you were given?

Take time to unwind and do not let work take control of your life. Spend time with your family, pursue hobbies and understand that your job is a means to an end and not an end to a means. At the end of the day no one is going to say, "Wow what a great financial planner he was."

Instead remember what your true responsibilities are in life. Sure, financial planning can be a major component, but keeping things in perspective will make for a much happier life.

How do you set client expectations at the onset of a relationship?

I try to manage expectations, especially so since the bulk of what we do is investment oriented. I do not promise the moon. In fact, I do not promise anything except that I guarantee diversification and a plan to reduce risk. I also promise a high level of customer service, which includes regular communication and timely advice. At the end of the day I prefer not to be graded on percentage returns, but rather on sound financial planning advice and above average customer service.

If a person's expectations are set at an appropriate level, he or she is less likely to be disappointed over the long term.

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It's All About Brass Tax!

The world is getting more complicated every day. We have governments on the verge of bankruptcy now becoming a daily headline. Everyone is focusing on their personal and financial assets and financial well being. The financial losses the average person has taken over the last couple of years is sickening. Politicians continue to bicker over fiscal budgets while the US economy suffers the fallout. These greedy, self-serving politicians try to win somatic points with the general public that simply don't care anymore. People today want things to work the first time and not have to be modified every day. The political turmoil continues to plague our economy and the world is watching with real scrutiny. How we continue to serve our clients becomes more important every day.

The other day a client called to inform me that the state is sending them a bill from a tax return he filed in 2007. They wanted another $3200. Many broke states as well as the federal government is in such shambles they are looking anywhere to find extra money. And, it is painfully clear they will try to put their hands in anyone's pocket to find it. The primary driver for the government is to get themselves out of the financial mess they have dragged us into.

For the government, the best place for them to go for more money is simple, it's taxes. Let me ask you a simple question — have you ever played a game with someone who wrote the rules? Taxes are a game, and let's not forget who writes the rules. With the government on the prowl, we now have a real obligation to clients that is greater than ever before. We must be able to advise them from a clear level of insight when it comes to the financial, but more important, tax arena.

It befuddles me that so many "Financial Advisors" whether they are a series licensed individual or not, attempt to call themselves a financial advisor/consultant have no real understanding of taxes. I feel everything a client does when it comes to finances starts and end with taxes. To be truly consulting with our clients, we must have a clear understanding of their current and future tax obligations.

This is so important if the client is planning to retire in the next few years. A Roth conversion may be a real value to the client or their beneficiaries. We can no longer run around and talk about products that defer taxes on non-qualified money. Many people have already heard that story. However, in some cases it may be all a client can due. You must be sure from a tax perspective and your client will thank you.

By having this tax knowledge, we command a huge advantage over our competition. One, we are full service to our clients. We are not just talking about tax deferral using an annuity which is what many advisors sell. Our credibility with our clients will expand exponentially. When we can speak intelligently about their tax situation from a tax approach you have instant credibility until you show otherwise.

Clients are more willing to listen and talk about taxes way before their investments and if you have credibility from this angle, everything else will go a lot smoother. Referrals will come a lot more frequently and the quality of your client base will improve. No more chasing low dollar premium policies.

I know what you are thinking, you have to open a tax office to do this but you don't. Go get educated on taxes; you do not have to go work for one of those "tax in a box" shops. You never have to do a return; but know how to read one. Be able to speak specifically about tax topics and how that relates to their return with more accuracy then just selling a concept.

Should you learn and do taxes for your clients, there are a few key bonuses you receive. First, you are guaranteed a yearly review with your client. If you choose to become a certified tax preparer or enrolled agent, not only will you better advise clients but residual income will come from the tax base. We should always look for ways to create residual income and this residual pays well.

When you are seen as a tax knowledgeable advisor and approach your practice from a tax perspective, your business will change quickly. You can stop wasting time with magical fact finds and lines of questions from these "closing experts". Why? It's simple. From a tax return, you will know more in 30 seconds about them than you will get in a 30 minutes of fact finding. Remember, that even the experts are still trying to overcome the resistance barrier and earn trust from prospective clients.

Now after many years in the business, I am sure that when most of your clients are referrals, closing gets easier. Why? Because, you came to them already with the credibility you need. But, I am not looking to wait that long. We need to be creditable today not tomorrow or next year. There may not be a tomorrow with the competitive market place we are in today.

You can make things even easier by working with a CPA. In the beginning you could pay a CPA to work with you and your clients. The CPA hopes to gain another tax client and you still make a solid sale. Maybe, the CPA sees what you are doing and refers a few folks to you. I believe we call that a win-win model. The CPA can help you show the benefits of things like a Roth Conversion which still causes an opportunity for a product sale. When you have the tax proof of why they should do what you suggest, the sale closes itself.

Let's be clear, I charge my clients to do their taxes. Do some math if you had even 50 people at $200 per return that is $10k in your pocket. You need to do the taxes for every client you have and I bet your success in this business doubles. I am doing tax preparation now for old and new clients. When I went to one yesterday to talk to them about pulling from product A and put in to product B they were fine because it made good personal and financial and TAX sense.

We would all agree that our needs change yearly. When you are involved with someone's taxes then you are there when a change takes place and you can recommend new or other products that improve your client's positions. From the point of being a reliable advisor, you will not need to sell your clients other products because you can show how it solves that problem.

You may not get every client to become a tax client but that's ok. Just taking the time to cover their taxes in relation to the product you show them changes your status to the client. When you intelligently show them what their tax situation will be in the future, that is worth your weight in gold.

Let's not forget, most people have no idea how taxes work and base everything on what last year's return looked like. No one is out there doing tax planning except for the extremely affluent. But, I suggest to you that everyone who files a return needs to plan for next year.

It is my opinion all of these training guys who are not still selling in the field can only take you so far. The value they have will be in better ways to present products and ask certain questions to get certain kinds of responses and that is valuable. But in the end, credibility combined with taxes is going to win the day. The marketplace is changing everyday and with a tax foundation we are there for every change and understand how it really impacts our clients.

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Inside the Executive Mind!

This topic of how to read people has fascinated me for about forty years. Beyond that, it's extremely relevant to your business. The value of reading a prospect can be represented in two very simple truths:

1. The faster you discover what the other person values, the faster you show yourself as being relevant.

2. The more you learn about the other person, the easier it is to establish a trusting relationship.

There are two scenarios where your ability to read people is important:

1. In a large group setting, like a mixer at a conference, or a university alumni meeting, you see several hundred people in a hotel ballroom. Which ones do you pick out to talk with first? How can you spot the people who have the highest probability of having considerable assets and influence?

2. When a stranger comes into your office. What might you learn about that person by the time you finish shaking hands? What can you determine in three seconds that will tell you what NOT to say?

Those two situations are classic scenes that you will encounter throughout your career. Your ability to read other people will serve as your radar to identify great prospects and networking sources.

What about executives? When the other person happens to be an executive, it's a good guess that you'd want to know everything about him or her, and you'd want to know it right away. Jumping to an inaccurate assumption could be costly.

You're in luck! Here's great news. When it comes to executives, you know a great deal about them BEFORE you ever say Hello. Executives tend to have the Driver personality type. I've been researching this type of person for many years and can give you a psychological profile that most likely fits him or her without ever meeting that person. That's because executives (Drivers) share some common qualities, thus they are somewhat predictable – and identifiable.

The value of values. We teach our clients to think in terms of executive values. If you can understand the decisions that spring from those values and the resulting behaviors, you can take a giant step closer to connecting with most executives in a way that is meaningful to them. Let's look at some of their values and see how you can use that information in your business:

- **Control.** People who want to be in control tend to gravitate to situations that allow them to take charge. Those people would seek to own a company or become executives. I've watched these people for many years; they are the world's best decision makers. For you, let them believe that they're in control. Defer to them, and tell them, "It's up to you."

- **Punctuality** means you cannot be late to any meeting. It also means the time belongs to the executive. When to start and how long to talk is not set by you; it's set by the executive. Punctuality is about time — not wasting the executive's time.

- **Perfection** covers the gamut from the punctuation on the proposal to the way you're dressed. So, hire an editor if you have a document to deliver, and buy an expensive suit of classic design. Dress like they do. It also means giving the perfect answer to every question. And, the perfect answer is always, "Yes sir." Executives are delegators, so assume that you will have to do leg work that they delegate to you.

- **Relevance** is seemingly simple. When you are shown into the executive's office, do not start talking about the traffic or the weather — unless the executive does first. Small talk is irrelevant, off-target and a waste of time to them. Position yourself and your idea, then stick with that as the agenda.

- **Results.** Executives are focused on the shortest distance between A and Z. When you get to Z, there had better be a result, a benefit, a bonus, a pay-off. If your conversation and proposal are not linked to the pay-off, the exec believes that you are diverting focus to something irrelevant, and that means sloppy (imperfect) thinking and means you're wasting his/her time.

- **Goals.** There are people who have goals — and then there are these people. They live by goals, deadlines, benchmarks, ROI and the bottom line. If you can't deliver or operate effectively under that kind of scrutiny, don't try to work with or sell to these people.

In addition to the ones already described, their values include the following:

- Success
- Power
- Commitment
- Duty
- Family
- Loyalty
- Accountability
- Honor
- Right & Wrong
- Tradition
- Practicality

Let's see what this might look like:

What do they look like?

Now you know something about how to behave when you're around the executive. But, the bigger question is still unanswered — how can you spot them? What do they look like? How can you be sure you're looking at someone with an executive mind?

Many years ago, I began to research the possibility of being able to determine the basic psychology of someone else, just by looking at them. The science behind it is extremely practical. There's a tiny part of the brain called the Amygdala. It's what controls our fight or flight response. Every sensation and experience of our lives goes through it. And, our reactions are displayed in our facial expressions.

So, through the years, your face makes the same few facial expressions over and over and over — thus, etching themselves into your skin. Actually, there are only about six significant expressions, and most people make only one or two. As a result, most people are very easy to read. If I can see your face, I can determine (with a high degree of accuracy) what kind of thinking has put those lines on your face. Those lines also tell me something about your behavior.

Can you see the similarity in those faces? With executives, their minds are in a constant state of judging the quality of incoming data. They want to know if that data is acceptable or rejectable, because they will use the data to make a quick decision. (What good is an executive who labors over information and takes forever to make a decision?)

Judging data is a cerebral activity, not an emotional one. And, it shows itself on the person's forehead. If that person has the Driver personality, you'll see few if any lines on his or her forehead. Why the forehead? That seems to be where people register emotional reaction to information.

Beyond the facial lines and expressions, you'll find several other ways to spot them.

1. They tend to have job titles that include the words Executive or Director.

2. They tend to dress in a classic, understated style.

3. They have a "costume" for every occasion: tennis, golf, shopping, office, gala….

4. They tend to stand in a balanced "fighting" posture.

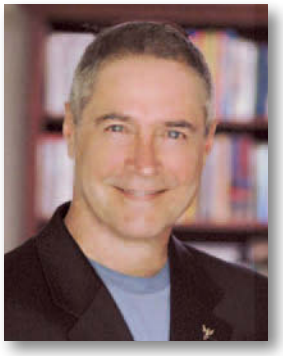
5. They tend to communicate as though they already have all the answers and are giving directions.

6. Their voices tend to be loud and energized.

These people are the commanders on the field of battle. They were born to call the shots. And, when you look at them, you can see that calling in their faces.

In Conclusion. When you see a face with no forehead lines, pretend you're talking to John Wayne on the battlefield. Would you interrupt the Duke or talk over him? No way. Would you slouch or vacillate. No way. Would you show a lack of determination? No way. Well, the way you'd communicate with John Wayne is exactly how you should communicate with an executive.

Your IARFC Reward. Would you like to know which personality type(s) your marketing is actually aimed at? It's possible that your targeting is too broad or that there is no targeting. Email me one of your marketing pieces, and I'll review it for you. No charge. michael@aboutpeople.com.



Michael Lovas

Michael Lovas is the author of twelve books, mainly on Professional Credibility and Psychological Communication in the financial industry. He currently writes several columns and has been published more than a thousand times since 1986. All of Michael's work teaches professionals how to use simple, effective psychology to write more business and inspire their clients to love them. Michael also holds the distinction of creating "Credibility Marketing" in 1991. He is also the cofounder and a principal of AboutPeople, a unique consultancy focused on helping advisors build credibility and relationships with their chosen target markets.

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5 Reasons to Backup Your Business Data

Every business knows that maintaining clear records and protecting important files is vital. Unfortunately, however, the process of doing so can seem daunting when budgets and employee time are already stretched thin. While day-to-day operations often take justifiable priority, every business is vulnerable to events that could impact or even destroy its mission-critical records or files. Below are five reasons why businesses should take the time to ensure that they have a solid backup plan.

1. Data loss is extremely common. A recent survey from Carbonite, Inc. found that 48 percent of small businesses have experienced data loss (up from 42 percent in late 2010). A variety of factors drive the majority of these data loss events, including hardware and software failure, accidental deletion, computer viruses and theft. Given that many of these events are such common occurrences, it's important that businesses understand the probability that they might experience a similar event and take action to protect themselves.

2. Backing up data protects businesses from the unexpected and the routine. As we all know too well from recent events across the country, natural disasters — fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, tornados — can happen virtually anywhere and can cripple businesses in an instant. In fact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) found that 40 percent of small businesses never reopen their doors after experiencing a major data disaster.

While natural disasters get the headlines, Carbonite's research indicates that the most common causes of data loss for small businesses are typically less extraordinary but still quite dangerous. Accidental deletion, software issues, or hardware failure can wipe out critical data like client documents, financial records and email…and can disrupt business operations in an instant. Having the means to quickly recover these files after such events ensures that a business can get backup and running without missing a beat.

3. Cloud technology makes it easy to stay protected. Carbonite's recent survey results also found that small businesses often rely on multiple and outdated backup methods. Nearly half use external hard drives and more than one third using CDs, DVDs and/or USB devices. This has several implications:

- Backed up data is scattered across multiple devices. If, for example, payroll data is on an external hard drive while marketing brochures are on CDs, keeping track of which files are where becomes cumbersome.
- Backed up data is likely not current. Despite what are often the best of intentions, it is quite difficult to ensure data backed up on a CD or USB drive is current with the data on your PC or external hard drive. If your business uses multiple computers, keeping your business backup current becomes even more complicated.
- Backing up manually and to multiple devices takes time. This often adds up over the course of a year and represents an opportunity cost vs. spending more time running the business itself. In fact, an additional survey of small business owners by Carbonite found that 40 percent are spending at least 52 hours per year on backing up business data — which is equivalent to more than a full week of work.

With all of this in mind, the move to "the cloud" can be a welcome transition. Cloud-based, online backup options make backing up mission-critical data an automatic, seamless process. Online backup solutions are automatic, continual, encrypted, and stored offsite, and thus present small business owners with an alternative that is both easier and superior to traditional backup solutions.

4. The investment required is minimal. When it comes to protecting business-critical information, an ounce of prevention is, indeed, worth a pound of cure. A company's data is a priceless asset that, once lost, is often very difficult or even impossible to retrieve or recreate. The time and money spent in an attempt to rebuild a business after a data disaster will, in nearly every case, far exceed that of backing up from the beginning.

With the variety of affordable data backup technologies available to business owners, an investment in backing up data is one they can't afford not to make. Cloud technology, in particular, has made superior online backup protection an even more accessible option for businesses, with tailored SMB solutions coming in at mere hundreds of dollars per year.

When choosing an online backup solution, small businesses should look at options that best meet their data and budget needs, and look to avoid paying for complex feature sets that add cost with marginal benefit or for extra "per computer" fees that charge for both data and the number of computers backed up.

5. An automated backup system frees business owners up to focus on actually running their business. A business owner's focus can be forced to shift in an instant if data is unexpectedly lost. With the availability of automatic solutions — such as online backup — business owners only need to spend a very small amount of time getting started, and the rest takes care of itself with very little time or supervision.

This allows business owners to concentrate on what's important — focusing on running their actual business (with the peace of mind of knowing that their data is safe).

Pete Lamson is senior vice president and general manager of the small business group at Carbonite, a leading provider of online backup solutions for consumers and small to medium sized businesses. Subscribers in over 100 countries rely on Carbonite to provide easy-to-use, affordable, unlimited and secure online backup solutions with anytime, anywhere data access.

When registering for a 30-day FREE trial of Carbonite Business, use offer code IARFC to receive 2 bonus months upon purchase.

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The Message And The Medium

Cave men used minerals for drawing pictograms about their life and trials.

Moses carried his message on stone tablets.

Greek, Romans and their successors used stone for words and pictures, but significantly, they added the third dimension, depth, to their sculptures.

The Egyptians and Babylonians used Papyrus — long lasting but eventually crumbling into dust.

The Chinese elevated pictures into characters as an art form as well as the storage of their history, literature, and poetry.

For many centuries scribes copied scriptures, sermons and history into large books reserved for the intellectual and elite.

Then came the printing press and typography which spread knowledge to masses.

Edison and others recorded sound in a reproducible format using vibrations converted into wax, then plastic, then film.

Radio circulated sounds, but very little data, across a shrinking globe.

Television added images, personalities and conveyed only limited data.

Xerography captured and reproduced copy, eventually enabling it to be stored and transmitted by electronic wave.

Computers added reproducible, expandable logic and significant data retention.

Storage programs and data went from punch cards to tapes to discs (plastic/ electronic circles of increasing capacity and shrinking size).

Now computers use addressable and editable memory, and programs and data are available in solid, not rotating format.

The Internet expanded the value and speed of data and image transmission, but initially added no intelligence.

Now a new generation of equipment is widely distributed to the masses power; smart phones, IPods, IPads, Kindles.

The Kindle Fire and Smart phones move the medium to the clouds, with a theme that all data is elsewhere, the device is for input and display as a portal to programs and data accessed electronically.

Recognizing Acceleration

When you were swiftly reading the stages of intellectual calculation and data storage listed above, you probably thought of a few more significant elements — as you should. No list of that type is ever complete, because you could dig down further into the culture of other countries — and their understanding and records of astronomy, art, psychology, music, etc. You might suggest Mayan calendars, pyramids.

However, the critical point is **acceleration**. The intervals at first are thousands of years, then centuries, then decades, now years and soon months between major evolutionary changes.

Five years from now if you ask a bright teenager about Apple's iPad or Kindle's Fire they will say, "What's that?"

What will be the most effective tool of intellect and data offered years from now?

No one knows, it has probably not been invented yet — or it is now in the minds of the inventors, not yet into laboratories and production.

What we are seeing today is a global collaborative intellectual power that was heretofore unavailable. Loci, data and commands instantly transmittable worldwide.

Entering data has gone from the chisel, to the brush, to the keyboard, to the mouse, to the fingertip and the voice. What is next? What is the ultimate linkage: perhaps directly from the source to the brain and vice versa.

Storage gets smaller and smaller. It is much easier to lose your iPod shuffle than a desktop computer. Why not place the addressable chips inside your body?

We all have some bad habits: could a computer reduce your desire for too much beer, a second serving of lasagna or the pleasure derived from smoking?

Of course, an internal computer linked to your brain, addressed by a satellite could stimulate aggression or even influence you to vote Republican.

Maybe we could send a signal to receive a unique pleasure, view the temples of Egypt as if we were climbing the steps, or embrace the full emotions pathos of a great opera.

Where Are We Going?

There are no concrete or absolute answers – because inventions of 2030 will be based on those introduced in 2020 which are now only budding in the minds of developers.

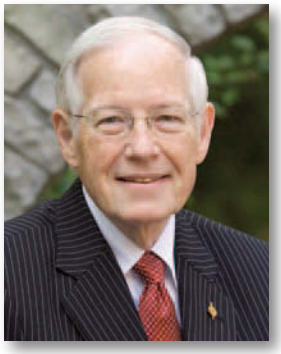
Who should get the credit for iPad, Steve Jobs or all the thousands of technicians programmers and production workers? How much credit should be awarded to bygone predecessors like Atari or Wang. Without Steve, would we have had iPad? Yes — just a bit later — or maybe even earlier.

As a financial consultant all of this development will impact you in three ways:

- Client investment risk and opportunities
- Building your financial practice and career
- Shaping a better life for you and your family.

Who are your biggest competitors?

- The Internet?
- Do it yourself?
- Which is more important to the sustainability of your practice, getting clients or keeping them?
- How can you keep great employees forever? You can't. They might become infected with the same spirit of entrepreneurism that drove you to establish your firm or to buy out a predecessor.
- Which is more important over the long time for your practice, hardware or software?
- Skills and experience in understanding and usage?
- Skills and experience and delivery?
- When the Clouds are gone, what's next?



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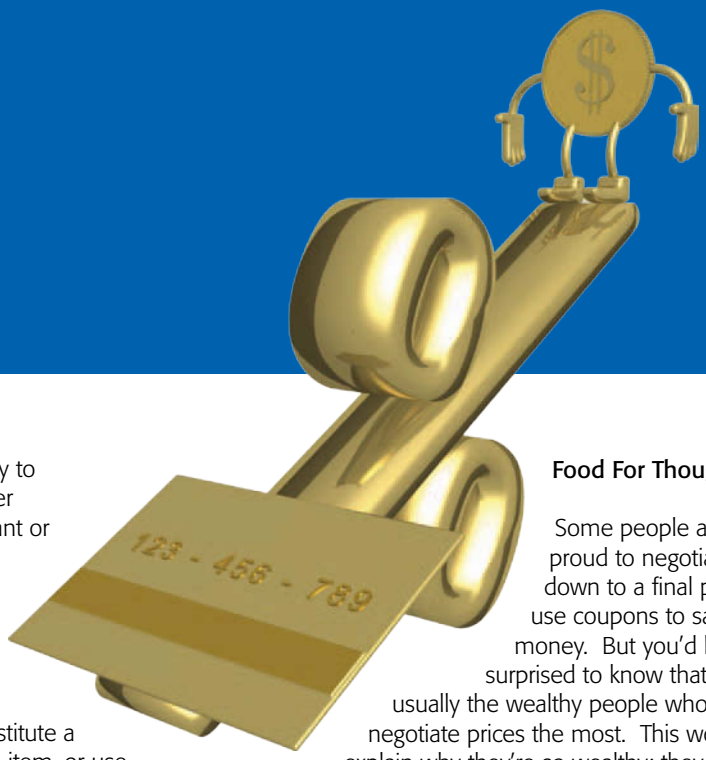
Is it a Need? Or, Is it a Want?



Start helping your clients, friends and family to "**Live Debt Free and Truly Wealthy.**"

What's the main reason people are struggling with their finances? Is it because they are spending their money on the things that they want, instead of the things they need? Isn't it our responsibility, as Registered Financial Consultants, to help families to spend, save, invest, insure and plan wisely for the future, to achieve financial independence? Then shouldn't we be setting a good example, along with helping them to… establish better spending habits and priorities.

Is there any question that there are things that we all need to survive? We need clothes, shoes, food, a place to live and generally some sort of transportation.

Then there are the things we want. These things aren't necessary for our survival. But, never-the-less we want things like designer-label clothing, dinners out and a brand-new car.

The reason most of us are in debt, and are not saving for the future is sometimes we get our 'wants' mixed up with 'needs.'

Example: We all need clothes that are warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

These clothes need to be of good quality so they'll last a while, and they must fit us. However, we may want the newest trendy jeans, expensive running shoes, or a new outfit that must be dry cleaned after each wearing.

Another example: Most of us need a vehicle to get us back and forth to work, but we want the newest four-wheel-drive truck or latest sports car.

The problem is that many of us have never learned to distinguish between our wants and our needs. We spend a lot of money on "wants"- things that we don't really need.

Here's a quick way to determine whether something is a want or a need:

- It's probably a want if: it's possible to delay the purchase, substitute a less expensive item, or use something you already have, or own.
- It's likely a need if: you're purchasing something you need to survive.

Learning to distinguish between your wants and needs will put you in control of your financial situation. It also helps you to:

- Set spending priorities
- Make wise choices about spending
- Get the most value for your money
- Be a thoughtful consumer
- Keep from getting into debt
- Save money

Learn To Spend Like A Millionaire

The best-selling book 'The Millionaire Next Door' revealed what most of us have suspected: "The key to wealth is living below your means." According to authors Thomas Stanley and William Danko, most millionaires buy their suits off-the-rack; drive Fords and shop at Sears.

It surprises most people that they have it all wrong about how someone becomes wealthy in America. As you read 'The Millionaire Next Door' you'll find it's rarely an inheritance or advanced degrees or even intelligence that built their fortunes. In most cases it is the result of hard work, diligent savings, and living below your means. Most of America's truly wealthy do not live in Beverly Hills or on Park Avenue - they live right next door! "**Eighty percent of America's millionaires are first-generation rich.**"

Food For Thought

Some people are too proud to negotiate down to a final price or use coupons to save money. But you'd be surprised to know that it is usually the wealthy people who negotiate prices the most. This would explain why they're so wealthy; they know the value of their hard-earned money and are not eager to part from it.

If you want to be truly wealthy, then work at **"Spending Like A Millionaire!"** How much money would that allow you to free up every month? How much money would you now be able to put away for your future? How much better off would you be?

"He that can have patience, can have what he will." — *Benjamin Franklin*

Lew Nason, RFC®, RTIA, LUTCF

Lew Nason, RFC®, RTIA, LUTCF, with his sons Jeremy Nason, RFC®, and Will Nason, are the creators of Found Money Management™, a complete 'Turnkey' marketing and sales success system dedicated to helping Middle Income Families to 'Live Debt Free and Truly Wealthy.'

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COACHES CORNER

The IARFC is pleased to provide contact information on persons who offer coaching, mentoring or tutoring services.

Some extend free time or a discount to IARFC members. This listing is not an endorsement or guarantee — as RFCs are qualified to judge who can help them in the areas where services are most important. This roster is alphabetical by last name.

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Positive Outlook For 2012 Economy

2011 started with hope that the economy would recover and unemployment would drop. After a roller coaster of a year, the broad market ended flat but with a positive outlook for 2012.

In the first quarter of 2011, the S&P finished up 5 percent; however, hopes were soon dashed. The "Arab Spring" may have brought optimism to North Africa, but it created uncertainty in world politics. A strong earthquake and tsunami in Japan interrupted the global supply chain. The ongoing debt crisis in Europe brought extreme volatility, apprehension and aversion to our markets.

Political problems in Washington led to a downgrade of our debt, but more importantly dashed American and foreign belief that our political leaders could fashion a way forward. Our own housing problems were not solved and prices continued to decline. In the third quarter, the S&P fell 14.33 percent.

The S&P 500 index finished the year almost exactly where it started: At the end of 2010, the index stood at 1,257.64; at the end of 2011, it was 1,257.60. The Dow Jones industrial average was much better, rising 5.5 percent on the year, outdistancing all other equity indices worldwide.

This seemingly flat performance of the broad market masked the extreme volatility of the year. On 35 trading days, the market closed with a gain or loss of 2 percent or more, making 2011 the most volatile on record for stocks.

Last year, $6.3 trillion in value was wiped out of markets. The euro ended the year as the worst performing currency. The United Kingdom's FTSE index fell 5.5 percent, while European blue chips fell 11 percent. The Nikkei lost 17.3 percent, Hong Kong lost 20 percent and Shanghai lost 22 percent.

Oil prices zoomed up to $114 a barrel and then plunged to $76 a barrel. By the end of the year, it was at $100 per barrel.

As political and financial risk spread around the globe, the U.S. dollar and Treasurys resumed their historic roles as safe havens. Even after the U.S. suffered its first credit rating downgrade, investors pursued Treasurys and dollar denominated assets.

It is notable that the reason given for the downgrade was not the U.S. economy, but the failure of political leadership. Political leadership also failed to solve the financial crisis in the euro zone, where debt problems at national and local levels threatened stability. Governments on both sides of the Atlantic lost their credibility.

As the dollar strengthened, prices of most commodities — including gold — dropped. Liquidity dried up in Europe and it became necessary for the U.S Federal Reserve to provide a massive loan of dollars to the European Central Bank so that the wheels of finance and credit could turn in Europe. The action took place to provide liquidity in Europe, but it was quickly labeled a bailout of Europe by the U.S.

Anyone who thought we would escape the European problems unscathed was simply not looking ahead. While it was necessary for the Fed to take this action, it certainly does look like a bailout.

But European bankers, acting like bankers everywhere, quickly borrowed all the money the ECB provided and immediately placed it back on deposit at the ECB. Losing money on every deposit, the bankers preferred to take those losses, rather than lend to each other or — perish the thought — to businesses.

This behavior echoed our bankers' response to TARP — the huge government bailout in the U.S. — in which money was simply put into lock boxes and not lent as hoped. But while Europeans hoped that commercial banks would lend the money and buy some of the sovereign debt, there is little evidence that either is happening.

In the U.S., however, data shows a strengthening economy. Manufacturing activity increased in the Midwest. Seasonally adjusted unemployment claims declined, although that may have been because people were dropping out of the workforce.

The National Association of Realtors said that its index of pending home sales rose to the highest level in more than a year. The index, which measures the contracts to sell existing homes, is considered an indicator of future sales activity. The index rose for the third consecutive month and was up 5 percent over a year ago.

Other reports showed an increase in consumer confidence and greater retail sales.

Through all these problems, the U.S. economy has muddled through — not always with style, but with progress. Most importantly, American consumers, who represent 70 percent of our GDP, continued to spend. The U.S. began to look like the least bad economy.

By the end of 2011, in spite of all the problems ahead of us, this nascent recovery has begun to look like the real thing.

William Rutherford

William Rutherford is the founder and president of Portland based Rutherford Investment Management. Information herein is from sources believed to be reliable, but accuracy and completeness cannot be guaranteed. Investment involves risk and may result in losses.

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Business Mirrors Life

Need A Successful Family Business Strategy? Don't Speak To Each Other

We knew we had finally made it. The cover of Auto Dealers Magazine had a photo of my brother and me with our backs to each other. The headline: Estranged twin brothers build the most successful dealership east of the Mississippi.

How did we get so successful? Our marketing plan was based upon our "supposed" estrangement. The customers loved it. Let me explain.

It had all started out innocently. We had inherited the business from our dad. We owned two GM dealerships across from each other. Our business was stagnant — everyone was buying foreign cars. Harry, with his ego, suggested we start using TV in a big way to gain market share. However, we needed to differentiate ourselves from all the other guys screaming that they offered the best deals. Well Harry came up with this idea of having us fighting with each other like when we were kids, but this time fighting over customers.

At first it was just fun. Our commercials would show us running across Erie Blvd. trying to snarl each other's customers or have me cutting the phone lines into Harry's office so that he could not make any sales calls.

Our revenues sky rocketed. We were grossing more than any other dealership in the East. And then over time, fiction became reality. We needed to maintain our TV personas not only in the office but in our daily lives too.

We stopped sitting next to each other in church. We went to moms for dinner on different nights. When we needed to meet face to face, it was absurd; we put on wigs (different colors) and sun glasses and would meet at a Starbucks fifty miles away.

We were too successful to change. The city had agreed to put in a traffic light and cross walk for customers who were running back and forth. Our accountant could be seen running across the highway with his arms full of computer print outs as he would update us each separately on our sales.

I started getting tired of the routine. I had grandkids that I wanted to spoil. And sometimes I wasn't sure if the animosity was real or pretend. I did know for sure that I wanted out. I put my half of the business up for sale, but there were no buyers. I offered it to Harry but he was willing to pay me bubkis (Yiddish for basically 'nothin'). And every potential buyer realized that the success of the business was tied into our estranged relationship.

How was I going to get out? I could try finding two other twin brothers and offering them the business. I thought Harry might agree to sell his half too if he got the right price.

I hired a business broker to sell our business. The scoundrel wanted an extra 3% because of the demands we had placed on him. Even after I agreed, he could not come up with any serious buyers. I finally found my own expert. He was an advisor to family run businesses. He specialized in siblings as co-owners, and would you believe it, his market niche was twins. (Of course, he was based in Twinsburg, Ohio.)

"Could our kids take over the business?" He asked. Well I did have twin girls and Harry twin boys. Imagine if they took over the business, then it could grow into four dealerships that didn't talk to each other.

We had an extended family meeting in Twinsburg. It was the only place that we wouldn't be conspicuous. The kids were actually interested. The ideas started flying, perhaps dealerships that focused on environmentally correct cars. No, the boys wanted to focus on trucks and muscle cars for the macho market. The discussion got heated. They were screaming at each other.

They stormed out not talking to each other. This was great. My brother and I got up and shook hands. Our family business would continue for another generation.

Both sets of twins stepped back in. "Hey dad(s) we think for this to really work we shouldn't talk to our parents either. Sorry but business is business."

Hesh Reinfeld

Hesh Reinfeld, an experienced journalist, passionately believes that a properly crafted bio or marketing profile will cause a prospective client to be sufficiently attracted to read it, and to feel, "I'd like to meet this person." Perhaps you would like Hesh to help you prepare a similar biography for you, or to assist you with writing assignments that will help you in your market.

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