EXITING STRATEGIES

THE CEO's SEVEN CRITICAL STEPS TO CASHING OUT OF A BUSINESS, MANAGING AND PRESERVING WEALTH




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Executive Summary

When CEOs consider exiting strategies, they tend to fixate on valuation, considering the price of the deal the most important factor. Although the value of the business is an important issue to consider, it is certainly not the most critical. Even more essential to the success of the exit are the following:

- A logical approach that considers all factors ... *A Good Process*
- A compatible fit between buyer and seller... *A Good Match*
- Appropriate terms and structure... *A Good Deal*
- A well-thought-out implementation plan... *A Good Exit*

The Pillar Wealth Management, LLC *Exiting Strategies: The CEO's Seven Critical Steps To Cashing Out Of A Business, Managing And Preserving Wealth* guide will outline a process to prepare a CEO considering the cashing-out of a business near-term and also improve the management practices of CEOs that are striving to build the value of their business over the long term.

In writing this guide, we have used parts from our book *Beyond Wealth: Finding The Balance Between Wealth And Happiness* and combined them with additional knowledge and experiences. For many years, we have been helping wealthy individuals and families make the most of their hard-earned wealth through the implementation of advanced wealth management strategies.

This resource guide will empower you to make smart decisions about your exiting strategy so you can achieve all that is important to you. Let's get started making your exit dreams a reality.

Introduction: Challenges Of Cashing Out

A Case Study – The Sale Of A Family Business – Are We Getting Enough?

Bill and Jennifer Edwards, a couple in their mid-40s, had built the company from scratch and had carved a narrow but very profitable niche in the orthopedic medical devices field.

A competitor had made a very attractive offer on the business from a valuation standpoint that would result in a net $13.4 million, after taxes and transaction costs.

The offer was appealing to the Edwards as Jennifer had developed some health issues and the idea of spending more time with their teenage children before they went off to college was very appealing to both of them, after many years of 60-hour weeks while the children were young. The transaction was only a few weeks from closing when the Edwards had serious reservations about going forward. Their issue: "Are we really getting enough?"

They quickly arranged a meeting with their wealth manager, attorney and CPA. The attorney and CPA assured them that they were getting at least fair if not better-than-fair market value. But then Jennifer said, "That's not what we are asking. We know that we are getting market value, but will it be enough for us to be financially independent for the rest of our lives with at least the lifestyle we enjoy today?"

Bill had run a "straight-line" projection at an 8 percent return on the sale proceeds, considering their expenses and assuming a 3 percent inflation rate. It looked like it would work. However, the negative returns of 2000-2002 provided little comfort that his analysis had any validity, and they were not willing to bet their future on it.

The Edwards revealed the following facts and objectives to their wealth manager (today's dollars):

Financial independence at age:	Bill – 45 Jennifer – 42
Life expectancy:	Bill – 92 Jennifer – 94
Amount to leave to heirs:	$3,800,000
Required after-tax income:	$574,000 (annual)
Assumed inflation rate:	3 percent

The methodology used for the Edwards simulates 1,000 lifetimes of investing, including the potential for markets producing results even worse than the Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression. These analyses allow us to determine if our clients have a high enough probability of achieving their goals while avoiding unnecessary investment risk and without undue sacrifice in their lifestyle.

The result of the analysis for the Edwards showed an 82 percent confidence of exceeding all of their financial goals and objectives. An acceptable range is between 75 percent and 90percent. Over 90 percent, our clients are either making unnecessary sacrifices in their lifestyle and/or could continue to reduce the risk of their portfolio. If the probability for success is below 75 percent, either the goals and objectives are revised or we advise the client to not go forward.

This gap analysis is always the first critical step in developing your exiting strategy. We'll finish the Edwards' story at the end of this guide, for now let's go over what you'll need to do in order to accomplish Critical Step One.

Critical Step One: Develop Your Exiting Strategy

The first step in undertaking a cash-out is developing a strategy. Your exiting strategy will allow you to consider your options and your personal goals and determine your timing and objectives in exiting.

Take the time up front to consider why, when, how and to whom you would ideally transition your business.

This will allow you to approach the exiting of your business in a deliberate, meaningful way instead of chasing opportunities in a haphazard way. Some of the questions you will want to ask yourself include:

EXITING CONSIDERATIONS:

- Why am I considering selling my business?
- What personal objectives would be achieved through selling my business?
- What type of professionals/advisors will I need and who are they? Are they specialists in helping CEOs of closely held businesses with exiting strategies?
- What would be sold?
- Who would be the ideal buyer?
- What are my strategic alternatives? Internal sale to employees or partners? Sale to a competitor?
- What is the profile of my customer base? What synergy would I look for in a prospective buyer?
- What is my time frame for completing the sale process?
- How much do I need to net from my business sale to achieve my financial goals?
- Do I need a specific cash amount or am I open to terms?
- What will buyers regard as strengths and weaknesses of my business?
- What is my commitment to this process?
- Do I want to stay with the business after the sale? For how long?
- What do I expect to do after I have left the business?
- What are my "must-haves" – my "deal killers" and "deal makers"?
- What do I picture a "successful" exit looking like?
- How much will it cost me to sell my business, and what do the various professional advisors charge?
- I hate paying taxes! How can I avoid or minimize paying taxes when I sell my business?

The Edwards discovered that Critical Step One eliminated most of the anxiety they felt when they made the decision to cash out of their business. Knowing that they had an 82 percent confidence of exceeding their goals gave them peace of mind and confidence to go forward with the sale.

Once you've developed your exiting strategy and determined that your goals are achievable with a high degree of probability, it is now time to start building your team.

Critical Step Two: Develop Your Team

THE TEAM

There are a number of advisors who can help you work through the cashing-out process. Some of them you may already retain in the day-to-day operations of your company. For example, your CPA and business attorney may have sufficient experience to be a valuable part of your advisory team.

Other advisors must be interviewed and hired. Keep in mind that your advisors are all independent professionals. They are not related in any way other than being retained by you. Their independence can create some confusion and, without your encouragement, result in the process stopping or moving ahead haltingly. Therefore, look for advisors who have experience working as part of a team orchestrating successful exits for their CEO clients.

Exit planning advisors know how to:

- Help you establish and quantify realistic exit objectives
- Determine not just value but a likely sale price for your company
- Create or enhance the value drivers in your company
- Expedite the sale process by avoiding mistakes and solving problems
- Level the playing field so that the buyer's advisors don't outperform yours
- Minimize or eliminate the bite the IRS takes out of your sale proceeds
- Design and implement wealth transfers to subsequent generations
- Tell you when you are not ready to sell your company

THE INVESTMENT BANKER

Your investment banker should be a specialist in your industry. He or she will be the one who will find, qualify and in some cases interview the buyers for you. Investment bankers usually require a monthly retainer in addition to a success fee at the close of the deal. On the following page is a guide to help you qualify the investment banker.

Interview Guide For Selecting An Investment Banker

ABOUT THE FIRM

1) *What investment banking services do you provide? Which ones are your core services or strengths?*
2) *What is your past experience?*
3) *What makes your firm different and better?*
4) *Who will be staffed on the assignment for our company?*
5) *May I speak with some of your past clients?*
6) *How do you charge for your services and why is this fair compensation?*
7) *Why should our company hire you and your firm?*

FAMILIARITY WITH THE MARKET

8) *What do you know about the (your industry)?*
9) *Please explain the depth and breadth of your relationships with buyers, sellers, financiers, investors and other professional services providers serving my industry.*

DEAL PROCESS

10) *What will be done in advance to prepare our business for the sale?*
11) *What are the steps in your deal process, and how long does it take?*
12) *What proprietary resources or intelligence does your firm have to facilitate the success of the deal?*
13) *How does your deal process differ from others, and why is it prone to generate better results?*
14) *In the deal process, what can I expect you to do and what am I expected to do?*

POST-DEAL

15) *How can you help me after the deal is finalized?*
16) *In your mind, what are the keys to a successful transaction?*

THE FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Your financial advisor is generally the advisor who helps to assemble the advisory team, gathers information and facilitates meetings during the early stages of the exiting strategies process. In locating the right financial advisor, you'll want to know that he or she understands and specializes in helping CEOs with the exiting process. If they don't, then they'll certainly acquire a great deal of expertise in working on your sale, but you will be the one paying for their education – and it will be a very expensive education. He or she will help you determine the sum of money you will need from a sale to attain financial security. The advisor will project your post-closing estate planning needs and assist in meeting those needs. He/she should also serve as your private CFO in managing your wealth and helping you meet all the goals that are important to you.

THE TRANSACTION ATTORNEY

These are the attorneys with whom you consult when you sell your company. They specialize in executing transactions. They know what's happening in the marketplace and how to keep a deal moving toward a close. They also provide the horsepower you will need to level the playing field. Buyers arm themselves with highly experienced transaction professionals. To ensure yourself a fair shake, you must do the same. Now that you've put together your team, you'll need to get your house in order.

Critical Step Three: Get Your House In Order

When you begin considering cashing out and discussing your business with other people, you must be able to access and communicate the essential information about your business. Organize your business and materials on your company so it is not a fire drill every time you engage in discussions. While you may not release everything at once, you need to be prepared to present the appropriate information at the right time.

ORGANIZE YOUR BUSINESS

Business profile

- Business focus
- Business strategy and differentiators
- Brief history
- Organizational chart

Customer profile

- Demographics

Business processes

- Nature of products and/or services provided
- Do you have any key employees who may transfer with the sale?

Marketing

- Primary ways in which you get customers
- Does any one source represent the majority of your new business?
- What do you do to help ensure retention of customers and employees?

Finance

- How has your business grown in gross revenues over the past five years?
- How has your mix of income evolved over the past five years?
- How have your overhead costs changed over the past five years?
- What is a responsible projection of future income from your current business?

The Edwards decided to hire an investment banker. The one they chose was able to illustrate how he could help them package their business as a great acquisition. Even though they had a hot buyer, getting their house in order was a critical step in maximizing the price they got for the business.

Now that you and your investment banker put your house in order, let us see what it is worth.

Critical Step Four: Value Your Business

CEOs often ask us, "How much is my business worth?" Our answer is usually "What the market will bear".

You want to get a sense of the value of your business, either by having a formal valuation done for your business or by approximating a range of values using the methodologies discussed in this guide. The primary considerations in valuing a business are:

- Cash flow
- Risk
- Growth
- Transferability
- Industry valuation standards
- Current market environment

Cash flow: The profitability or cash flow of a business has a significant impact on its value. Cash flow is the amount of money that flows to the bottom line in your business after covering all expenses and paying fair market compensation to all professionals, including the owner(s).

Risk: There is risk inherent in making any investment. The amount of risk of your business relative to other comparable investments impacts the value of your company. Factors that can influence the level of risk in a business include:

- Mix of revenues
- Technology use
- Geographic location
- Staffing issues
- Marketing process
- Economic and market conditions
- Cost structure
- Dependency on owner(s)
- Customer profile

Growth: Because valuation is a forward-looking exercise, projected growth in long-term earnings also has a major impact on the value of a business.

Transferability: Value is a function of the future. Some forms of revenue are more easily and predictably transferable to a new owner. The more consistent and predictable the form of revenue, the easier it is to transfer. Similarly, some business practices, processes and customer service models are more transferable than others. Prospective buyers are willing to pay a reasonable price for a business that can demonstrate an ability to generate future cash flow. Buyers are not willing to reward past performance unless there is a reasonable indication of continued performance in the future. Therefore, transferable revenue streams and business practices have a positive impact on the value of a business.

> *Just as with selling your home, you want a professional who specializes in your price range and specific geographic area. The investment banker you choose should know the players and have the contacts. Remember, whether it is real estate or your business, you want a frenzied auction environment. The bigger the frenzy, the bigger your selling price is likely to be.*

Now that you've determined a price based on the above four factors as well as industry valuation standards and the current market environment, it is now time to court buyers.

Critical Step Five: Preliminary Discussions With Prospects

Preliminary discussions give the buyer the opportunity to communicate his or her strategy and how he or she sees your company fitting into that strategy. The potential seller should have a clear understanding of why the buyer is interested in order to be as positively engaged in this process as possible.

The initial discussions should also deal with the issues of philosophy, culture, expectations of customers and other "intangible" issues. While these can be difficult issues to put your arms around, you will want to start building your understanding of the other party immediately, as the intangible issues may be more vital to the success of the deal than the financial numbers. The following are questions you will want to consider in your initial discussion:

INITIAL DISCUSSION CONSIDERATIONS:

- How committed is the buyer to this process? Is the buyer window-shopping or committed to purchasing a business?
- How closely does your business align with the buyer's target business criteria?
- Is this an organization you would be interested in becoming part of or want to work with?
- Is this someone you are comfortable having work with your customers and employees?
- Is the timetable the same for both parties?
- Are personality differences surmountable?

The preliminary discussions will give you insight and firsthand observations about how the buyer philosophically runs a business and their operations style. Be prepared with questions about the buyer's business, their acquisition strategy and their planned implementation approach. This is where you will discover how prepared and logical your potential buyer actually is. What the buyer says should be in line with their proposed strategy. If the potential buyer is a pair or group of partners, watch how they interact with each other. You should gather enough information from this meeting to know if you want to continue discussions. In your first meeting, you will want to cover issues like the ones outlined here.

THE AGENDA

1. *Learn the basic facts about the buyer's business and share the basic facts about your business.*

- Business profile
- Customer profile
- Services/products
- Business processes
- Marketing
- Organizational structure
- Ownership
- Basic financial facts
- Technology use

2. *Learn about the personality of the buyer and/or the culture of the potential acquiring company:*

- Qualifications
- Communication style
- Management style
- Customer service standards
- Business strategy and goals

3. *Learn what makes the other party interested in making an acquisition:*

- What do they expect to accomplish?
- What is their timing expectation?
- How much personal involvement do they expect?

4. *Discuss the steps:*

- What needs to be accomplished?
- When and by whom?

The buyer's urge to get right down to the "brass tacks" of price and terms can be overwhelming. Resist this temptation. Discussion of the pricing and terms of the deal raises the tension of the discussions and often narrows the flow of information. Don't discuss price and financial details until you are comfortable with the compatibility of businesses. In discussions with a potential acquirer, keep your strategy in focus at all times.

Confidentiality agreements: Ask prospective buyers to sign a confidentiality agreement before you show them any detailed information. Confidentiality agreements are difficult to enforce, but they act as a serious psychological commitment for most buyers. Those buyers who are not willing to sign or wish to make numerous changes to the confidentiality agreement should be regarded with caution. Please note it is important to obtain independent and qualified legal counsel to draft agreements specific to your situation.

EVALUATE BUYERS

In addition to the economic considerations, buyers and sellers must evaluate how their values, philosophy and business culture will fit with those of the other party. In the case of a merger, although opposites can strengthen a business, it is important to assess the cultures and philosophies of the two businesses to determine whether the merged entity will have legs to stand on once a merger is consummated.

For many, the art of the deal is what is appealing. But for successful deals, it is critical that the basic issue of culture and philosophy be addressed up front. Consider the following in evaluating the potential buyer(s):

- Do you share the same values?
- Will your employees and customers like him or her?
- Does the buyer have a demonstrated willingness and ability to pay?
- What will you do to facilitate the transfer of ownership?
- Is the buyer a good fit with your exiting strategy?

Remember that you are emotionally attached to your business – allowing your professional advisors to handle the preliminary discussions may be a wise idea.

Critical Step Six: Due Diligence

Once the buyer and the seller agree there is a good match, the buyer will begin their due diligence process. For the seller, this is an invasive part of the exit process. At this point, you may need to disclose to your key employees that you are negotiating to sell or merge your business.

There are many documents the buyer will want to review, detailed in the checklist below. You should have this all prepared well before you enter into this stage of negotiations so as not to delay the discussions. In addition, by doing your own internal due diligence early, you will have had the opportunity to clean up any problems and outstanding issues. Make sure that you have had the buyer sign a confidentiality agreement before providing this detailed information.

You will need to have the following data and information available during the due diligence process.

DUE DILIGENCE CHECKLIST

Business/Financial

- ❑ Three to five years' financials
- ❑ Breakdown on revenue, quality, quantity, type
- ❑ Copy of business plan and/or marketing plan
- ❑ Copies of any leases or contracts
- ❑ Licenses
- ❑ Patents
- ❑ Detail on mix of business
- ❑ Credit history/bank references
- ❑ Intellectual property

Marketing

- ❑ Press releases
- ❑ Advertisements and other public relations
- ❑ Promotional materials
- ❑ Special markets, niches, positioning

Customers

- ❑ Customer profile/demographics
- ❑ Average size
- ❑ Largest customers/percentage of total revenue
- ❑ Strength of relationships
- ❑ Average time with the business
- ❑ Customer survey/satisfaction results
- ❑ References

Personnel

- ❑ Personnel manual for the business
- ❑ Organizational chart
- ❑ Employee retention
- ❑ Employment contracts, if any
- ❑ Staff satisfaction/morale
- ❑ Skill levels
- ❑ Any employee written reviews
- ❑ Benefit programs/insurance records
- ❑ Payroll records

Operations

- ❑ Policies and procedures manuals
- ❑ Insurance records
- ❑ Software/technology
- ❑ Assets
- ❑ Inventory
- ❑ Real estate
- ❑ Equipment

Critical Step Seven: Structure The Deal

There are a number of critical issues that must be considered and satisfactorily negotiated in structuring the sale or purchase of a business. Because the sale of a business is usually an emotional experience, it is best to involve a trusted advisor (financial advisor, CPA, lawyer, investment banker or consultant) in this process.

> *You wouldn't go to an unknown brain surgeon to perform surgery on you; in fact, you'd want the best. The right transaction attorney can be the difference in your cashing out with millions or having a deal fall through.*

It is difficult to make rational, logical decisions on either side of the transaction in an emotionally charged atmosphere, and it can be helpful to have a third party involved as a facilitator as you work out the details of the deal structure. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the deal structure. Many CEOs go through the process of identifying buyers and even negotiating the purchase price but often fail to consummate the transaction because of an inability to agree to terms. Even when the terms are agreed to, if they are not considered carefully, a deal can be put together that is ultimately unsuccessful because it is not affordable for a buyer or neglects to address critical issues for one side of the transaction or the other. There are a number of critical issues that have to be negotiated beyond the purchase price.

DEAL STRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Payment terms
- Non-compete agreement
- Buy-back provision
- Representations and warranties
- Indemnification and hold-harmless clauses
- Performance of duties
- Security or collateral
- Resolution of conflicts
- Interest rate on contract

PURCHASE AGREEMENT

Once preliminary terms have been agreed upon between you and a potential buyer, you should elicit a formal "letter of intent" that outlines what you have agreed to on a preliminary basis in terms of price, structure and the transition process. The letter of intent is not generally a binding agreement, but it gives you both a framework for going forward. It could also include a "break-up" penalty if the buyer decides to walk away. If the letter of intent was binding, it would be as legal and enforceable as a purchase agreement.

Authoring the purchase agreement and controlling the language of the document puts you at an advantage. Having your own attorney draft all the documents allows you to better control the language and puts the buyer in the position of negotiating components of the contract. In addition, any provisions that one party concedes during negotiations of the contract should probably be reciprocated by the other party in some form, so authoring the agreement gives you further leverage in achieving your goals with the transaction. Obviously, a qualified attorney who is familiar with the relevant business and tax laws that impact such transactions should always write such documents. In a letter or memo to your attorney, communicate in your own words what you believe you and the buyer agreed to. This will give the lawyer a stronger framework for crafting a document that expresses the intent of both parties. This should help to minimize costs as well as any last-minute breakdowns in the deal itself.

Regardless of whose lawyer is drafting the documents, you will want to be sure to resolve any final issues before proceeding with the draft of the final agreement. If there is too much uncertainty, don't allow yourself to be pressured into an agreement until you have adequately resolved the issues. It is important that you maintain your focus on your objectives, respond to reasonable concerns in a business-like way and attempt to obtain some benefit from every concession you make. Emotions do not belong here.

You must be prepared to walk away from the transaction if it is no longer within your realm of reasonableness or aligned with your exiting strategy.

Be sure to involve your financial advisor, CPA and lawyer in identifying all the critical issues before you sign, because you want to make sure that what you net is what you intended.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once you close the sale, the real work begins for most CEOs. Whether you sell your business on an "earn-out" basis or for a specific value, the buyer will likely have some expectation that you will help facilitate the transition.

Brace yourself emotionally for this experience. The sale of a business is usually emotionally difficult for the CEO, particularly if they have devoted sweat, tears and years to building the business. It is also likely that your employees and customers may have an emotional commitment you will underestimate. Your gain in selling your business is their loss. The success of your ability to transfer these relationships to the buyer will in large part depend on your ability and preparation to honestly help employees and customers understand "what's in it for them" in this change. Commit to this transition process with as much vigor as you did when building your business to ensure that the legacy you leave with your customers, your employees and your professional community is how you want to be remembered.

Mergers and acquisitions of businesses fail for three primary reasons:

1. No clear strategy as to why the parties should do the deal
2. Cultures and business philosophies are incompatible
3. Expectations of the parties are unrealistic

It is important that you examine these issues well before you begin your discussions. Otherwise you may not be prepared emotionally and financially to make the right decision about your business.

Your Next Step

Just as the Edwards needed a process to help them get through their sale, you too could follow the seven critical steps in this guide.

In the Edwards' situation 1,000 simulations generating random returns were evaluated. Their portfolio met their goals and had a targeted ending value of at least $3,800,000 at age 94 in 823 of these periods. This is an 82 percent rate of success. In 140 periods (14 percent), their plan not only failed to achieve the desired ending value of their portfolio but also ran out of money during their life.

While the Edwards had an 82 percent probability of success, they also had a 4 percent probability of being "under-target". In their case, this indicated that while their lifetime cash flow needs would be met, they would have a 4 percent probability of leaving less than their goal of $3,800,000 (today's dollars) to their children. This was acceptable to the Edwards. However, Jennifer was very concerned with the 14 percent probability of failure, which means just that – their goals and objectives would not be met and they would run out of money during their lifetime.

The Edwards understood that this analysis is updated on a regular basis as part of the goal review process. Bill then stated to Jennifer, "The way I understand it is that this analysis will be updated regularly and if we dip below the 75 percent success rate, we will make an adjustment at that time to put the program back into the success range rather than let the plan fail at a later time. The adjustment may be as small as us living on $500,000 for a year or two until things improve or as big as downsizing our home when the children are on their own."

Bill's conclusion was right on target. The goal is to continually monitor the program and make adjustments as necessary and react to real-life events as well as changes in your goals and objectives.

The result of this analysis is that the Edwards were able to confidently go forward with the sale of their business and look forward to their new lifestyle.

Given today's market volatility, one of the most important things you can do as a CEO is to ensure that your exiting strategy is current. Your plan should examine where you are now and where you need to go to realize your financial goals, and it should also identify the gaps you need to overcome.

It's important to recognize that it is very difficult to be good at all things. Because most of us are not wired, from an emotional standpoint, to effectively develop and maintain our exiting strategies, you may want to consider working with a qualified financial advisor. One major survey of affluent CEOs found that 90.2 percent of them want to work with financial advisors.

If you do choose to work with a financial advisor to update and implement your plan, you should be aware that not all advisors would approach your investments in the same way. There are two types of advisors: those who are transactional and those who are consultative.

The difference? Transactional advisors are primarily focused on recommending a variety of investment products to their clients. Consultative advisors, on the other hand, are primarily concerned with offering their clients a consultative approach that will help them meet their clients' goals and needs.

Because consultative advisors are committed to uncovering your true financial needs and goals and crafting a long-range investment plan that will meet those needs and goals over time, we recommend that you choose the consultative approach.

And what should you expect from a consultative advisor? The most successful consultative advisors use a systematic process, usually spread over a series of meetings, to design an investment plan that maximizes the probability of achieving your financial goals. These meetings typically involve the following:

- *A discovery meeting* – The advisor will determine your current financial situation, where you want to go and the obstacles you face in achieving what is important to you.

- *A wealth management plan meeting* – The advisor, using the information he or she gathered at your first meeting, will present to you a complete diagnostic plan of where you are now and specific recommendations for how you can bridge the identified gaps in order to achieve your goals.

- *A mutual commitment meeting* – At this meeting, assuming that the advisor can truly add value, both you and the advisor will decide to work together. You will now officially become a client.

- *Follow-up meetings* – These meetings are typically held semiannually (but can be more or less often, depending on your specific needs) and are when the advisor reports to you the progress you're making toward achieving your goals.

You should always expect outstanding service from any financial advisor you choose. Your phone calls should be returned on the same day, you should receive quick and complete responses to all your questions, you should be able to meet with your advisor as often as you wish, and your advisor should always take your unique needs and preferences into account. In short, you should expect to be treated like what you are – a very important client.

If you are currently working with a financial advisor and are unsure if he or she is using a consultative approach or the proven methodologies we've discussed here, you should have another advisor complete a diagnostic plan of your situation so that you can have a second opinion.

This is an exciting and challenging time to be a CEO. There are many things going on around the world that will make the next few years extremely rewarding if you design your exiting strategy to be successful.

You owe it to your family and yourself to make sure that your exiting strategy is designed to not only deal with the changes you've experienced during the last few years but, more importantly, to also take advantage of the opportunities to maximize the probability that you will achieve all your financial goals. We wish you nothing but success in achieving all that's important to you.