



Leading by example

by Steven L. Anderson, Ph.D., MBA

One component of leadership is showing financial responsibility. You can never make your dreams come true unless you can do a good job of financing them. I have a friend and mentor, Ralph Antolino, who is not only an effective leader, but he spends his life helping others meet their financial goals and objectives, by his expertise as a financial planner. Ralph offers Securities through NFP Securities, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC. He offers Investment Advisory Services through Antolino and Associates, Inc., a Registered Investment Advisor. Antolino and Associates, Inc. is a member of PartnersFinancial, a division of NFP Insurance Services, Inc, which is a subsidiary of National Financial Partners Corp, the parent company of NFP Securities, Inc. NFP Securities, Inc. is not affiliated with Antolino & Associates, Inc. I wanted to share his story with you because I am hoping that his story might assist you in your development toward becoming a more effective leader.

The first quality about Ralph that I admire is that he is a dreamer. He is an instrument rated pilot who owns an airplane and has a second home in the Caribbean. He also runs a successful financial planning business in Columbus, called Antolino and Associates, Inc. When I asked him how he created this lifestyle he told me he made up his mind a while back that he was going to have this and he developed a plan to achieve it and then he executed. He told me that the only way to make dreams come true was to make sure you had them in the first place. And he dreams big. That is another quality of great leaders. They inspire others because they reach so high.

Secondly, Ralph spends almost all of his time trying to help other people make their dreams come true. He does this by listening to them, helping them identify what matters most to them and then helping them devise a plan to make their dreams become a reality. I believe he is very good at what he does.. What separates Ralph from most of his competition is his holistic approach. He realizes that financial wealth alone does not constitute success. Therefore, he preaches to his clients the necessity of making sure that their plan encompasses all important areas of their lives, like family, health, business, community involvement (charity), and wealth. He believes that the only sustainable wealth is that which is created on a solid foundation.

Finally, I admire Ralph because he is a big believer that happiness comes from your state of mind, not from the state of your living circumstances. Ralph wrote a book, entitled, "Bon Voyage". In it he tells an amazing story. He and his wife, Cindy, took a month-long cruise on the Queen Mary a few years ago. Events took place on the ship that made it necessary for the captain to decide to skip a few ports on the itinerary. Ralph and his wife couldn't have cared less, but most of the passengers spent most of the cruise making themselves and the ship's crew miserable by focusing all of their attention on the portion of the trip they were missing, even though the cruise line offered the passenger a substantial discount for the inconvenience. Here, they were sitting in the lap of luxury making themselves miserable. Ralph is right; happiness truly is a state of mind.

Having Ralph for a friend is a great pleasure. Not only is he a pleasure to spend time with, but he consistently sets an inspiring example of how to lead. If you want to hire a great financial planner, consider Ralph Antolino. If you want to become a great leader, follow his example.