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**Jason Blumer** • Aug. 02, 2011



I can't help but preach the message that *change is coming* in our profession. That is my end goal in every professional thing I do. This type of confabulation may offend you or it may encourage you. But my goal is to take away your comfort as you lead your professional practice into the future. Avert your eyes! Look away from that tax return or audit, and seek to decipher the future that is taking us all over. For sure, the

future will involve the traditional services you offer now, but it will involve so much

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I have multiple coaches in my life that constantly tell me what is wrong with my practice management theories, and then seek to help me understand how to change. We all need this counsel. That is the kind of information you'll find in my monthly articles here at *CPA Practice Advisor*. And that is the kind of discussion you'll find in the professional network for accountants I formed, called the THRIVEal +CPA Network (more info at [www.THRIVEal.com](http://www.THRIVEal.com)). So far, more than 100 accountants from around the world have joined the Network to learn, grow and change.

## Comfortable No More

People, groups and countries begin a gradual and often unnoticed decent into decline when they become comfortable. As human beings, we always drift towards comfort. In fact, we need rest and comfort to recharge so we can begin again with renewed efforts to do our jobs, meet the needs of our families and serve mankind. But there comes a time when comfort can overtake us and take our eyes off of our ultimate goals. We've become too comfortable in the professional tax & accounting space. In fact, our profession is in a dangerous state of becoming irrelevant. I believe we are in decline, and that sucks.

This comfortable decline will hurt us as professionals, it will hurt our practices and it will hurt our clients. Treble damage. That really sucks.

I believe comfort is now doing damage to the profession. The leaders of our professional firms are comfortable for the most part. They may be ready to retire, ready to sell their firms or just ready to merge and end the pain of tax season. But what about the future of our profession? What are we doing for those who work in our firms, or those who are in university preparing for a life in public accounting? They need to hear this message: *The public practice of accounting can change the lives of the practitioner and those we serve.*

Here are three things we can do now to fight the perils of our current professional

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... you just can't see them. Invest in a coach.

**2. Join a community of change agents.** This is what the THRIVEal community is all about. We don't offer CPE for our time together, and we don't take tests. We get together to talk about our issues — how others have tackled these problems and help each other grow as professionals. As a Network, we are focused on four foundational tenets: Community, Collaboration, Technology and Innovation — ideas we need help with to grow as entrepreneurs. Hang out with change agents, and you'll become a change agent yourself.

**3. Set goals.** Setting goals is all about overcoming fears. We don't set goals because of our fear of failing to achieve those goals. I have the same fears. But when you make goals, it intentionally averts your eyes from your present to your future. Those who look ahead are the ones who achieve great things. They fail to meet all of their goals, but they achieve a lot more than they could have had they not set those goals. Become paperless in 2011, stop accepting the wrong clients, serve one niche, get rid of your servers and stop offering non-valuable services. It will take years to achieve these goals, but you better hurry. Some firms have a jump on you. They are moving ahead and welcoming the changes in our profession.

Change is coming. Where will you be one year from now? Three years? Five years? It better not be where you are now. Change is a constant now. You've got two choices: Grow or leave the profession. What will you do?

Technology

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