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**Michael Wherry** • Dec. 15, 2017

*“Never underestimate the value.”*

That was the phrase on the poster I received from the AICPA shortly after receiving my CPA license in the late 90's. That phrase has always stuck with me, and although the AICPA has rolled out new taglines over the years, I think it deserves a dusting off.

As we try to keep up in today's fast-paced, disruptive world, we need to remember we are extremely valuable. We have a fundamental understanding of how business works. Yes, it ties back to debit and credits, but today we don't need to worry so much about transactions – we have technology to handle that. Heck, technology is even out-performing us in compliance work such as monthly financials, dashboard reports, payroll and even income tax returns. What is a CPA to do? Compliance work has been our golden ticket for so long.

First, ask yourself this: do you enjoy the debits and credits or are they just a means to an end? (The end being the starting point of understanding, motivation and support.) CPAs have been and always will be the best people to help our clients understand what the numbers are saying and provide motivation and support as we work with them to achieve goals. By helping clients achieve goals, we achieve our own goals as well. Investing in our clients and sharing in their growth is foundational to being a CPA.

Two years ago, I came to the realization that I needed to alter my career path. I'd spent 19 years doing the technical CPA thing and had this overwhelming feeling that

I was just spinning my wheels. However, I did enjoy working with clients. I spent

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## Align

When I decided to make the transition to consulting, I realized that I needed clarity on what it meant to be a consultant. For me, it means helping CPAs challenge the status quo and improve their overall experience of being a CPA.

Once I reached this conclusion, I had another decision to make: go it alone as a solo consultant or find a group to team up with. Of course, I chose to join Boomer Consulting.

## Lead

Joining Boomer Consulting enabled me to align my vision with a leading consulting organization and a proven track record of helping CPAs. Our mission statement is to make you more successful and future-ready.

## Train

Making the transition from traditional CPA to consultant requires a lot of training. But with the support of our amazing team of industry-leading consultants, I had an advantage. I was brought in with open arms and given a plan that would allow me to become a consultant. My plan has been a mix of client engagements, problem-solving and a ton of reading. To rise above the crowd, we must be lifelong learners. At Boomer Consulting, we constantly share books, articles and other resources with each other. Doing this allows us to learn faster.

## Engage

We must engage with our clients and show them how much we care before we try to tell them how much we know. It's critical to ask our clients good questions so we can

better help them. To be successful, we need to view an engagement from the

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our colleagues. If we don't push ourselves, how can we challenge the status quo and help our clients reach sustainable success and future readiness?

## Repeat

The first four steps of this five-step process will get you excited about the possibility of doing more with your clients. But you need to remember that consulting is different than traditional CPA work. Consulting work will not repeat on its own. You'll find that after a successful engagement your clients will want more, but you'll need to find the right questions to ask again. The engagement that you helped them with last time might not be what they need this time.

If I can make the transition from traditional CPA to consultant, you can too. Start by reading two books: *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol S. Dweck and *Million Dollar Consulting* by Alan Weiss. Then pick one or two consulting services that you want to bring to your clients. Now press pause and develop a tentative plan to launch these services and find a team to help you. Why a team? Because this transition to consultant is more fun when you have an amazing team to pick you up when you fall and celebrate with when you succeed! Good Luck!

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