Saving Families One Business at a Time
Tales From The Front Line

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Saving Families, One Business At A Time.

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The Truth

I want to honor my word.
I made a commitment.
I don’t want to default on the bank.
I am not ready for this
It’s too severe.
I am not comfortable with the process.
My spouse does not like it.
My attorney and accountant do not like it.
I trust my banker and he said he would work with me; I don’t want to hurt him.
I can’t afford it.
It’s too good to be true.
I will just wait and see what happens.
It’s getting better.

No I am not taking a paycheck…but
Yes I am in arrears to my vendors…but
Yes I owe my landlord… but

And on and on the excuses, justifications, and lies go.

No problem, we are here when you are ready, however, the reality is:

You have no choice….

And the sooner we begin the workout, the better. As your position erodes, your options decrease.

Call us; we are here to help save your business, the jobs, and the families you support.

They are all depending upon you to lead them to safety.

Our mission is saving businesses, jobs, and families…one business at a time.

This is the most honorable approach to take.
Preface

What It’s All About; Why We Do This.

Saving Businesses, Jobs, and Families...
One Business at a Time

I remember exactly when it all began. Over thirty years ago as a young commercial lawyer, I was frequently going into the Bankruptcy Court in an attempt to create a workout for my stressed business clients, always pursuing a way to keep my clients in business and rid them of their crushing debt so they could operate successfully again. I was not trying to save them and the jobs they provide or the families being supported by the business, all of which were seconds from destruction.

Survive, emerge and succeed. That was my vision and my battle cry. It did not work, as there were no legal remedies for the pay-or-die position of the banks.

One after another, I would file a chapter 11 reorganization, and while expensive, it was the presumed path to take in order to accomplish our objectives: to remove debt and keep the business alive.

The banks would move for liquidation, the court would comply with the request, and that would be the end of the business. I could not get most small businesses through the process safely.

One day with great frustration, when the next stressed business owners came into my office for help, I knew what the result would be. Not wanting to take their money and lead them to execution, I picked up the phone, called the banker, and while not expecting cooperation, I exclaimed what I was willing to offer. I told the bankers that if they did not accept my debt-consolidating plan, I would simply wipe it all out with a chapter 7 bankruptcy and end it mercifully and with little cost.

To my surprise the banker agreed, and thus began my path to non-bankruptcy debt workouts.
I further came to understand that if the legal process was engaged at any level, there could be no victory. Legally, there was no defense, no offense, and no strategy that would prevail. No workout would ever occur in the legal arena.

I decided to move the battle to the financial arena and talk recovery to the bank rather than liquidation. The bankers understood this and were willing to engage in this dialogue if I presented them with the proper scenario that had a better result than liquidation. I began to capture the banks’ interest and was able to resolve a few situations safely and within reasonable workout parameters, without litigation and without bankruptcy.

I had discovered the path. I found the way to accomplish my objectives successfully and cost efficiently. This was the beginning of a long road of creating, designing, and perfecting workout strategies that yielded the best results possible, the results I was looking to achieve. I was removing the debt from the stressed businesses, reducing the personal guaranties to affordable losses, and saving the businesses and the jobs that the families depended on.

From that day on, I have never again brought a client through the bankruptcy process, and I have successfully worked out a few thousand small businesses, saving businesses, jobs and families. I had created the business model that I wanted and that the small business world needed: a safe path to re-organization that is outside of bankruptcy court, outside of the legal arena, and without litigation.

Many say it’s too good to be true. However thirty years later and a few thousand successes (with very few failures) say otherwise.

My strategies have evolved over time and became more flexible, more creative, and broader as we figured out how to handle the many nuances of a successful business workout. We developed our style. This included figuring out how to resolve SBA guaranteed loans, credit card debt, tax deficiencies (even the unpaid 941 payroll taxes), and of course, secured bank debt, lines of credit, leases, and landlord debt, most of which are considered impossible to workout, yet we did.

Along the way I further determined that there was more to be done then just debt workouts to support the emergence and success of my small business clients as they got into trouble because they were deficient in managing their business, not just because of unsupportable debt. The issue became: why was the debt unsupportable? While debt relief was a huge step in the right direction, upgrading their business skills and turning their business around with a viable turnaround plan became the next objective to accomplish.
Then came Visioneering, Resources Planning, Todrin and Associates, and now Second Wind Consultants, where I continue to evolve and develop workout and turnaround strategies designed to save businesses, jobs and families, one business at a time.

Truth be told, I am addicted to the excitement and challenge of small business. I have created and implemented 61 businesses to date, including 19 real estate developments of all kinds, condo conversions, residential sub divisions, commercial developments, and strip malls. I love the excitement of risk taking and I understand the creative forces behind small business development.

While engaging in my long trail of small business development, I also consulted with thousands of small business owners all over the country, helping them survive, emerge and succeed.

I believe small business is the hallmark of our country’s enterprise, being responsible for so many of the jobs in this country and being the foundation of our entrepreneurial spirit which drives our economy. I have chosen to apply my skills at the lowest rungs of the entrepreneurial ladder, the true small business warrior: a few million in revenue or less, a dozen employees or fewer, occasionally handling a 5-10 million dollar business with 20-50 employees. This is small business as I define it; the heart and soul of America.

I do this not because this is the best financial decision I could have made; it isn’t. I could earn far more if I targeted larger businesses, but I understand the plight of the stressed small business owner, as I have witnessed far too many times the utter destruction of the families involved when a small business goes down. The destruction not only wipes out of the entrepreneur’s capital, family, and way of life, but it also wipes out the many jobs that support the many families that are at risk. The pain and suffering that these families endure is very real when a small business closes. Personal bankruptcies and divorce become the standard, lost homes and broken families the result. It is not the lost money that is the worst consequence, it is the lost jobs and families I defend, and the children and wives I fight for.

I committed myself to bringing my cutting edge skills and strategies to the smallest businesses in the country; where no other support of this nature is available; where it counts for more than just profit and loss; where failure is measured in broken families and success is measured in more jobs and happiness.

I have committed my life to saving businesses, jobs, and families one business at a time, as that is my higher purpose, my context, what drives my business, Second Wind Consultants Inc. and me. This book is about the men and women entrepreneurs who we have fought for and won, coming to us with their doubt, fear, pain and suffering, and trusting us to save their business, the jobs, and the families being supported.
This book is about the Second Wind warriors, the men on the front lines who fearlessly commit their talents to saving businesses, jobs and families one business at a time, who refuse to lose, and who frequently accomplish what seems to be impossible. These warriors succeed because of our higher context, our higher purpose.

This book is also about our marketing men on the front lines; the men who are reaching out to pull small business owners into our fold. It is about our workout strategists, fighting the battles of small business hand-to-hand combat. It is about our attorney, my son, leading the way in the legal arena when necessary.

Everyone involved understands why we are here and what we are doing, saving businesses, jobs and families one business at a time.

Recently I have taken my skills to the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. I serve as a Master Mentor for the Center for Entrepreneurship, in their MVP (Mentor and Venture Program) program, coaching emerging small businesses owners for the University community, students, and graduates alike.

I have written two books: Successfully Navigating the Downturn and Embrace Change, the Field Guide for Successfully Navigating the Downturn, and I have designed and delivered an online course on the subject. I also have a weekly radio show on the same subject, giving away my experience and knowledge, spreading hope and light where there is darkness and despair.

I will do whatever it takes to support the success of small business owners, that is my mission.

I dedicate this book and our work to the families and the entrepreneurs, who choose to go into battle as small business owners and deserve a second chance, a second wind.

Here are their stories.
Acknowledgments

Adam Gleason, Senior Strategist, Second Wind
Adam is one of our great Senior Strategists at Second Wind and was the perfect man for me to go to with the following charge: take all the material for this book and organize it so it tells our story so others may understand what we do and join us.

Because he was so familiar with our mission, and so committed to our vision, he knew what I wanted to express, added enormous value, and did a terrific job in helping me create this book.

Aaron Todrin, Corporate Attorney, Sassoon & Cymrot
I must acknowledge Aaron Todrin, my son, who has many talents and serves this company in many ways. Aside from his very valuable legal representation benefiting Second Wind Consultants and our clients, he previously edited and proofed my last book, Embrace Change, adding much value to the end product.

Once again he has taken the written material from its many sources and has both edited it and proofed the content, making it a most excellent book.

Having my son help make this book tell the story that I envisioned is a gift to me; I am most appreciative.

Amanda Drane, Interviewer
Our journalist, Amanda Drane, who conducted the interviews, about 50 in all, successfully reached the emotional depths that these small business owners experienced, expressing their fear of what happened to them and their families, a reality that we at Second Wind understand. I wanted to share with the world the pain and resolution that our small business owners experience so others in similar situations would be less fearful and know there was help available. She did a magnificent job in helping them express this. I am thankful. Others will join us because of her work.
Dedication

Everyone who is part of Second Wind:

Donald Todrin, President
Richard McGravey, Manager, Business Development
Peter Tur, Vice President
Adam Duso, Senior Strategist
Greg Wales, Senior Strategist
Harry Greenhouse, Senior Strategist
Adam Gleason, Senior Strategist
Ken Elmer, Manager, Marketing Department
Ted Grindrod, Marketing Dept.
James Balderston, Marketing Dept.
Norman Schell, Manager, Debt Relief Services
Aaron Todrin Esq., Corporate Attorney

We are a team, dedicated to serving the higher purpose of this company,

*Saving businesses, jobs, and families…one business at a time.*

We do our best, as we know what is at risk, and success is our only result.

This book is dedicated to you, the warriors who make our mission a reality.
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Introduction

There are always choices to be made, never a wrong answer, just what is right for you. This I honor.

However, I believe that in times of deep stress, when all is at risk, you must remove emotion and make the logical decision that is best for you, your family, your business, its employees and their families. That is your responsibility.

Painful decisions, which are personally challenging:
- Breaching your word
- Defaulting on loans
- Not repaying vendors, landlords, banks
- Downsizing, eliminating loyal employees

These must be dealt with when you are at your best.

When survival is at stake, there are many things we normally wouldn’t do that become crucial and must be done.

When there are no other good alternatives, the right decision must be made, no matter how distasteful.

The words that come to mind: you have no choice.

I firmly believe many have been led astray. When a business cannot support its obligations, it is not a dishonorable matter. It is simply a fact of the times in which we live.

How we respond is where honor is achieved.

If we act honorably in times of deep challenge, we are at our best.

Our strategies supporting debt workout and forgiveness are the most honorable responses possible to an uncontrollable situation requiring debt forgiveness for survival.

We serve the banks in the best way possible, we serve our employees, we serve our families, and we survive to fight another day.

The stories you will read prove my point.

This book reveals the heart and soul of Second Wind, a team of dedicated men committed to saving businesses, jobs and families one business at a time.
Included are the stories of many of our clients in their own words, revealing their pain, their frustrations, their losses and their amazing turnarounds, the victories we won for them, surviving to emerge, and succeed once again, saving their families and themselves to fight another day.

We bring you this book for one reason, to help prospective failing business owners understand that there is another path to victory; you need not just pay or die. You need not file a bankruptcy and lose everything.

Now with us, you can survive, emerge and succeed...again.

This book is for all those filled with doubt, pain and misinformation. Read this and know there is help available.

You are them.

You are no different from the small business owners whose stories you are about to read, stressed and in need of help.

Let us help you. Let us save your business and family. They are depending upon you to lead them to safety.

Let us help you act as honorably as possible under extreme circumstances and deliver our best to all involved.

That is our mission.

Our vision is a second chance, a second wind.

Climb aboard. Together we will win.

We await your call for help.

Additional Note:

The stories recorded in this book are all based on the actual words of the participants as spoken in their interviews. They have been written by the men and women who share them, and NOT by Second Wind. To keep them as genuine as possible, they have not been altered or tampered with; they were published as is.

-DT
Chapter 1
The Interviewer
Amanda Drane
The Interviewer

These tales of struggle, sacrifice and defeat epitomize the plight of the post-recession entrepreneur. They are everywhere, and for lack of an apparent solution, many of us are either jaded or in denial that things could really be ‘that bad.’

Having no business background and living outside the entrepreneurial ecosystem, I admittedly was of the latter mentality. After interviewing 50-plus business owners, I have an all-new appreciation for who they are and what they do. These are strong, self-sacrificing, adaptive people striving to create value within a shattered financial system.

For those of you immersed in the business world, you have likely heard these stories before (or lived them yourselves). Whether you are just starting out, are assured and thriving, or beyond all hope, I urge you to take heed—try to read these stories through fresh lenses. Though the economic backdrop may appear dismal, the most important thing I’ve taken away from this project is hope.

And I certainly did come away from this project with some pearls. Like everything else in life, everyone has his or her own opinions about business. With things the way they are, it seems to me that business, now, is about survival. The people in these stories wouldn’t wish what they went through on anyone, which is why they so generously offered up their stories. I consider their lessons learned, and when I start a business of my own, I will not forget them. Who better to get advice from than those who have been around the block and learned some hard lessons the hard way? These are stories about real people, about their struggles and how those hard times yielded a better way to do business.

A thread that runs through each of these stories is the difficulty of accepting or even asking for help.

Business owners are a stubborn, self-sufficient bunch. For many of the people I interviewed, asking for help seemed to be the most difficult thing they ever had to do, but because their homes, their kids, or their marriages were at stake, they were willing to do anything. What became clear to me is that those who were able to hold on to their businesses were the ones who were able to let go of their pride early enough to let Second Wind help them. Perhaps the key to surviving in this economy is knowing when to reach out, and asking for help from experts who know what to do.
Not a single person I spoke with regretted reaching out to Second Wind. They appreciated the flat fee; many of them claiming other consultants or lawyers had always tried to charge more than what was agreed upon. To that point—integrity was a word often associated with Second Wind during these interviews. Expertise was another—many claimed Second Wind is one of a kind. They told of calling their Second Wind workout man late at night, on his wedding day, or while on vacation. Many said they felt like their only client. From the stories I’ve heard, the men at Second Wind are hell-bent on helping clients, and the relationships they’ve forged are lasting. They are fully committed and will do whatever it takes to win for their clients.

I didn’t know what to expect when I agreed to work on this project. At the very least, I figured, I’d be interacting with businesspeople on a daily basis, which in these times, can’t hurt a young journalist. I didn’t, however, expect the experience to change the way I live my life. I find myself hearing their advice going about my day—time is money, always be creating value. From them I’ve learned that most important decisions require you to “check your emotions at the door” and look objectively at the situation.

Their stories have made me a better person, and I’m sure they will one day help me be a better businessperson. I’m also sure, wherever you are in life, they will help you, too. Most importantly, ask Second Wind Consultants for help if you are in trouble. They will help you, of that I am certain.
Chapters 2-6

The Workout Team

Peter Tur
Adam Duso
Adam Gleason
Harry Greenhouse
Greg Wales
Aaron Todrin, Esq.
The following are the stories of some of our clients.

There are many, many more.

The stories are organized by the workout strategist who managed the worked as lead during the workout process.

We have five such strategists and one lawyer.

These men are the best.

They accomplish the seemingly impossible daily. They never give up. They are positive and supportive. They understand what is at stake and most importantly, they care.

These are the men who save families one business at a time.

You will see both the strategists’ thoughts on a client and the interviewers results, responding to the basic questions asked.

1. How did you get into financial trouble originally?
2. What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?
3. How did you find Second Wind Consultants?
4. Why did you eventually sign on?
5. What happened after you signed on?
6. How long did the process take to complete?
7. Who was the strategist who handled your workout?
8. What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?
9. What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

Here are some of their stories.
I met Donald Todrin and began working at Second Wind Consultants in late 2008. At that time the credit markets were frozen, the stock market was in free-fall and the housing market was in complete disarray. I was a young man full of ambition, and working with Don seemed like a good fit. I figured the economy would stay in very poor shape for quite a while, and learning to work debt out would provide great opportunities to learn and help those in need.

Within the first few weeks on the job I realized how unique our company was. Don truly had a passion for this trade and it was contagious. Debt workouts are certainly not glamorous or fun most of the time; we do it for the tremendous results it produces for the business owners and those who rely on them. We do it for that business owner who is helped by our firm and can support his family and make payroll so that those families who depend on its success can be supported as well.

I started working in the midst of the financial crisis and there was too much work to handle. Unfortunately we had to turn clients away, as there was too big a demand for our services and not enough manpower to handle each workout with care. We understood what was at stake for our clients and we decided to grow slowly so that we could absorb each client into our family and perform the job we promised. There was too much at stake and we would not tolerate failure.

As the years went on we added staff, improved our internal systems, moved to bigger offices, and added a non-profit division. We are bigger, more skilled and more polished than in those early days, but the mission remains the same: save the business, save the families that depend on that income. I wish we could have taken on everyone that needed help in those days; I imagine many of the businesses as well as the lives of the owners were ruined. Nevertheless, there will be another economic downturn one day, and we will be ready to help more of those in trouble and guide them to safety.

Over the years, we have done amazing work for our clients and I hope that this book demonstrates how we impact peoples’ lives in ways far deeper than just fixing a broken business. I feel we have given people hope and a second chance at chasing their business dreams. Many business owners come to us in despair and feel they have no options other than bankruptcy and total destruction. I’ve seen many people feel empowered once they realized that they could get through this tough time if they hire us to fight the battle with them. I hope that by reading these stories of debt workout success, you too may feel inspired if your business is failing and you need workout support.
There is always a way out of a difficult business problem, you just have to hire the right team that can lead you to victory.
Manufacturer
Colorado
Married with one Son

Debt Load: $1,780,000
Debt Forgiven: $983,000
Creditor: UPS Capital Bank

Interviewer – *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I began my business in 2005. I had good results for the first three to four years, but then the economy crashed and my receivables no longer came in like they should. My customers owed me money that they did not have. I began hiring attorneys to collect. It did not work.

In the end, I simply overleveraged my business. I bought land to build a manufacturing facility at the peak of the market and when the market crashed, my dreams crashed with it. There was little I could do to prevent my own downturn. I was trapped.

Strategist – *This client came to us with a failing manufacturing company that completed jobs all around the world. There was not a single market that was not affected by the recession, so his business declined drastically. He reached his bottom well below break even and could not support his debt.*

Interviewer – *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

After my revenue dropped, I was in trouble. I was not able to recover enough of my receivables to continue making my note payments. I ran out of money to pay anyone. The pressure was so intense and I brought it home. My wife divorced me as things continued to get worse. It was bound to happen. My stress was high and I had to make every decision one day at a time. It was survival living and my life was not good.

Strategist – *He leveraged the equity in his home to purchase the business years before, and as everything deflated, his personal life became very stressed. His life could not get any worse; his family, his home and his business were all in jeopardy and feeling deep pain.*

Interviewer – *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I spoke to a friend one evening about how stressed I was and he suggested I look for a workout consultant. I was able to find Second Wind Consultants. They have a good Internet presence. There was much information, many blog posts, and Dons books etc. He was quite visible, and appeared to know what he was doing.
Interviewer – *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I took out a second mortgage on my home and tried to solve my problems that way, but I only wracked up more debt. I had gone through a workout once before as an executive of another company. This was harder. I was no longer just one of a team; I was the one who had to decide. The consultation with Don gave me confidence that they could handle the task. I remarried while dealing with my debt issues and my new wife told me the most important thing is my health. I had lost my house by this time and I needed to relieve the stress or it would put me in an early grave. I took a chance on Second Wind for that reason, I needed help, I could not do this alone. They seemed like they knew what to do so I took a chance and made the decision.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

I began working with Peter Tur. The knowledge and confidence he displayed made everything less stressful. I challenged Peter often in the beginning, but he earned my trust through the process. He was very knowledgeable. He knew what to do in each circumstance and how to implement the right strategy. It meant a lot to me when he took my call while on his honeymoon. He has true dedication to his clients. He really cared about me and fought for me constantly.

Strategist – *He went through a divorce during the time that the business was failing, but as we went through the process, I learned that he had found someone new. He experienced a resurgence in his love life at the same time that he experienced a resurgence through my restructuring.*

Interviewer - *How long did the process take to complete?*

Peter and I worked together for more than a year to save my life.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Peter restructured and saved my business. My employees all kept their jobs and my stress level is very low. Now I stay lean and keep my overhead low. I learned a lot when the economy crashed and now I am able to apply those lessons in my business.

Strategist – *Once the business gets on stable ground, so do ones nerves and the client shared many stories of sleepless nights in the beginning, which he no longer has to endure. It is true; we do save families*
Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

Second Wind did what they promised. They have a lot to offer. I often act as a reference for new prospective clients. They care about their clients and are highly motivated and always do their best. They are experts in what they do.
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I obtained my business with an SBA backed loan. I bought the business at the peak of the market and then the huge recession happened. The debt was crushing. I had been the CFO of several previous successful companies, but with the new venture, I did not have access to the capital I was used to. I had no way out. I felt trapped.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

The bank told me the SBA is very mechanical. They have set rules to follow and could do nothing to help me.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

You take no vacations, no time off. You have to constantly be working, cutting costs and still behind your debts. I had to reinvest all of the money to keep the business running instead of taking a paycheck. I am a thrifty guy to being with, but it was very stressful. Everyone wants to talk to you when you’re opening your business, but you’ve got the plague when your business goes south. My life was very stressed, and I was always very worried I would have to lose everything I had worked to build.

Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

I’m a financial guy, so I understood what they were offering and it made sense. I believed they knew how to pull it off and had the experience and expertise required.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

I had a lot of anxiety. The waiting that was involved really grated on my nerves. The process is very stressful, but Second Wind just kept on playing their cards until it was all done. It worked out just as promised, I was very worried throughout the process but in the end it was very good.

Strategist – The client was able to get through this difficult period in his life by staying grounded, remembering his roots and realizing that this is a process that must be worked through and there is no room for anxiety and panic in business. He trusted us to do the job and we did.
Interviewer – **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Peter Tur. He is Polish as well and I would often speak to him in Polish. When I was stressed out and could not reach him with my first phone call I would curse at him in Polish as well, Polish curses are harsher than those in English. He was always very calm. He understood my stress and was a good man, a man who cares.

Strategist – **The client and I used to joke with each other in our old native language from time to time. He told me many stories about his Polish immigrant family and how they were raised very frugally, something that is quite common among Poles. We would joke about how being a business owner forces you to be frugal which is good since we are used to it. As with so many of my clients we became family, working together to win an important battle, to save his business and his financial life, and the jobs.**

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

I learned a lot. I am a finance guy, but I had never negotiated with the SBA. It takes a certain set of skills. I learned to hire experts. The people at Second Wind are specialists in their field. I am in a much better place now. They did as they said and saved me from a real disaster and total failure.

Strategist – **His children were all grown up and it was just he and his wife working in the business fighting through every day together and eventually winning.**

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

The people at Second Wind are very good at what they do. They know what they’re doing. The banks are ruled by conditions set by the FDIC and have no flexibility. It was easy to be intimidated by what Second Wind does in the beginning, the process is very non-traditional, but they are just utilizing the bank’s rules to help companies and families.
Construction
Florida
Married with two sons

Debt Load: $1,300,000
Debt Forgiven: $1,250,000
Creditor: UPS Capital Bank

Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I purchased a construction business in Southwest Florida right before the downturn. The residential housing market was my main source of revenue and it was the hardest industry hit in Florida when the economy tanked. The loan payments ended up choking the business near to death.

Strategist - He was once a very high earner in the corporate world and he put every dime he ever earned for 15 years into this Florida business that fell victim to the housing market crash. This was especially hard for him to deal with since he was watching his life's work deflate before his eyes.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

They refused to offer me any type of help. I was told my only option was bankruptcy. There are truly evil people in this world who only exist to take advantage. Banks have no interest in helping. It was a rude awakening, as I trusted my bankers.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

It was stressful. I worked all day every day. I never got to see my sons or take a paycheck home. I was considering taking the lender's advice and simply calling it quits and filing for bankruptcy. The threat of losing my home was devastating and added a level of stress that I had trouble dealing with. It was debilitating. It was a difficult time. I couldn't sleep, got headaches, heartburn, and drank heavily to cope. My wife and kids were very supportive; not very many marriages could stand a situation like that. It was a disaster.

Strategist - This client was the very definition of a family man. He and I would often speak when his kids were in the car on the way to Boy Scouts so I know all about them and their close relationship. He did as every strong man would, he kept his business problems inside and he worked through them in a logical manner, insulating everyone from his business problems as much as possible. It was very painful for him.

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I investigated filing for bankruptcy. The bankruptcy attorney told me it would cost an astronomical amount of money to file for bankruptcy. In fact, the attorney actually instructed me to contact Second Wind Consultants before filing. He said he had no idea how they were able to do what they described, but that he had seen it work in the past
Interviewer - *What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?*

I admit that I was uncomfortable at first. I researched the company online and it simply looked too good to be true. I wondered, if this company can really accomplish what they describe, why isn't there a line of clients waiting to sign up and a waiting list a mile long? Eventually I called and spoke with Don and then Peter. I had a lot more confidence after those calls. They seemed to be very confident and positive about what they could accomplish.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants was able to restructure the business, sell the assets, and liquidate. They helped me find a new opportunity and preserve my employees’ employment as the same time. I had a lot of fear and anxiety as we went through the process. It was very uncomfortable, you have to bare your soul to Second Wind to achieve success, but it teaches you so much. My family and I have new priorities thanks to Second Wind. They helped us through an extremely difficult and challenging time and delivered the success they promised. I was very thankful and appreciative.

Strategist - *He fought hard each day along side me and we made many difficult decisions together. He had a great “no problem” attitude at each turn. Rather than show any anxiety, his response was always, “what do we do now to fix this?”*

Interviewer - *How long did the process take?*

I am not sure exactly. Sometimes it felt like forever. It was a very slow, bureaucratic process.

Interviewer – *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Peter Tur. Peter is simply an incredible guy. How do I say this? He was reassuring, confident, and empathetic. At a time when I was losing my house, had attorneys calling, and getting served papers by the sheriff, I needed that support. It was unnerving. I spoke to Peter more than I spoke with my parents. He would spend hours on the phone with me calming me down, keeping me on track. He made me feel like I was his only client.
Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I learned a lot. I should have called them a year earlier. If you don’t have the right people behind you, you won’t be successful. With Second Wind Consultants, I clearly had the right people. Sometimes the best thing to do is the most obvious. The reason Second Wind Consultants seem too good to be true is because they simply use the bank’s system; they work within the system rather than challenging it like my lawyer suggested.

Strategist - *He was unable to keep his home through the workout, but he did it by choice and luckily he was able to walk away from it without liability, a great result. He was a pleasure to work with and he and his family are now happy in Florida.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

At first I thought they were incredibly expensive, but now I consider it an excellent value for what I was given. Second Wind allowed me a payment system. It was very fair. Now I am trying to give back to the business community and to Second Wind for saving me. I speak to prospective clients about my experience so they will take the leap and let Second Wind save them. I hope people listen to my story and get the help they need.
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I began my business in a small town that was rapidly expanding at the time. The business and town seemed to both be growing at a similar rate, so I decided to expand the business and build a state-of-the-art veterinarian facility. The recession ended everything. My business was located in a resort community and tourism disappeared overnight. The people who had purchased vacation homes began selling them as fast as they could find buyers.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

The bank had zero interest in talking to me prior to my involvement with Second Wind Consultants.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

My business and life had hit a wall. It was unbelievably stressful. It was bad. It was so awful; I never want to think about it again. My wife helped me through it. She was a good sport about everything. I already lived well below my means, thankfully the personal hit was minor, but the sense of frustration from failure was very painful; I did not want to file for bankruptcy but I could find no alternative until I found Second Wind

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I came across Second Wind Consultants in a Google search.

Interviewer - What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?

I kind of saw the writing on the wall and called Second Wind Consultants.

Strategist – The client is a problem solver by the very definition. He knew he was on a no-win course destined for failure unless he found a way out.
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants made the process much easier. They removed a lot of the horrible stress. Second Wind fielded communication from the creditors and attorneys, so I could run my business. The bank originally had zero interest in talking to me, but after Second Wind Consultants got involved, they became much more open-minded.

Strategist - *Even though a business failure can be difficult, he took it in stride and realized that every experience in life is a gift and an opportunity to learn something for the future. He sure learned much as he examined everything I did along the way and wanted to understand the workout process better.*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I’m a little older and a little smarter now. I learned to be better prepared and I am on better footing to tackle business challenges. I got lucky. I came out of it pretty much unscathed.

Strategist - *He is a veterinarian, but he is also a business manager and finance guy. With his deep understanding of business he was able to navigate this workout with me with little stress on his family. He kept it all to himself.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I’m glad Second Wind Consultants was there. They did what they said they would do, and really cared about me as a person, not just as a client.*
I started with Second Wind Consultants in 2009, during the peak of the recent economic recession. The housing market was in a free fall. Unemployment rates were through the roof. Banks were failing. Small businesses were failing by the thousands.

My first weeks in the company landed me with over a dozen clients; each with their unique story and set of circumstances. Each client was completely relying on us to deliver the possibility of survival. With rigorous training and supervision, I became skilled enough to develop advanced strategies that have since helped many families across the country be freed from the burden of excess debt which gave them a chance at future financial success.

Completing this work is very satisfying. Not only does it serve the best interest of our clients, but it also allows us to establish working relationships with creditors so that we may accurately meet their needs throughout the duration of a workout. It is important in every negotiation that both parties work together and make sacrifices in order to reach a common agreement. Win/Win relationships are far more powerful than Win/Lose relationships. Understanding this balance and being able to implement it with a level of skill and precision is very powerful and yields impressive results.

Being married and having a family of my own, I can personally relate to Second Wind’s mission, “Saving families, one business at a time.” Businesses support many families: not just the families of the owners, our clients, but all of the employees and their families as well. Understanding how our work will affect these people keeps our level of commitment very high. It’s as if I am fighting for my own family or friend’s financial livelihood. It’s as if the business operates in my neighborhood; if it fails and it closes, it will be my neighbors and friends out of work. With this context we cannot fail, there is too much at stake.

Throughout the almost five years of doing this work, my perspective of the world has changed. I now can understand and relate to what is at stake for a small business owner. I know what it is like to have others rely on you, not only for income, but also for a sense of security and community. I understand that failure is not an option. I can relate to making difficult decisions and personal sacrifices in order to benefit a small business organization as a whole.
Additionally, when reading or coming across information on failed small businesses, be it in my community or across the country, I see damage behind the story. I see the families who have been affected. I see many people being taken advantage of by their creditors. I feel remorse because I know more could have been done. I know we could have helped.

In short, this job, the clients, and the work in general has made me realign my priorities, be thankful for the opportunity to do such positive work, and to acknowledge what truly matters in life: family – be it mine or the family of my next client.

In the years since 2009, some things have changed. Stock prices have risen. Some areas of real estate have seen the beginning of a recovery. However one thing remains consistent: the small businessman is struggling. Revenues are low and costs are rising. The cost of goods, the cost of labor, transportation costs, and the cost of healthcare and benefits have all increased in the midst of a lot of market uncertainty.

Those with adequate financial reserves will weather the storm and will be fine. It is the small business owner who has already invested everything, who has put up his home as collateral, and who has no other choices who becomes collateral damage. It is for that small business owner and their family that we come to work every day. It is for that small business owner that we engage in these battles, always focusing on our mission:

“Saving families one business at a time.”
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I had a history of success. I am a marathon runner and an air force graduate with a history of successful business management. I bought a tech supply company with SBA financing. I put a lot of my personal money into the business to build it up. I hired someone to run the business for me who "shnookered" me. He left and took 90% of my client base. After that, I had only my personal funds to sustain the business and I was forced to default on my SBA loan in 2008.

Strategist - Client was a well-known businessman and motivational speaker with years of business success. The economic downturn of 2008, in combination with an employee who left and stole company business, caused his once successful company to struggle to meet basic expenses. Ultimately he could not and be defaulted on his notes.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

I had run plenty of successful business, but this was the first I owned. You shoulder all the risk personally when you own a business. You learn a lot, hopefully fast enough to survive. All your money goes to payroll. Cash flow is so important, it really hits home. It was just so stressful. I am on my second, and final wife. The stress absolutely impacted my family. It disrupts your sleep, your eating, everything. I used to have to run twice a day just to have an outlet to deal with the stress.

Strategist - This man and his wife were spending long nights not sleeping, putting stress on his second marriage, and had his wife fearing that the SBA default would land her husband in more serious trouble. His life was intolerable.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

We tried to nurse the loan as long as we could. When I could not handle payments anymore, I called the bank. I tried to get lower payments, but they would not consider any modification. They were of no help at all.

Strategist - The client did his best, but the bank was unwilling to participate in helping him survive.
Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I found Don and Second Wind Consultants online. I was very impressed with his commitment to his clients.

Strategist - **Despite this stress, the client found us on the web and was encouraged by the commitment Don Todrin had to his clients and Don’s belief in what he does.**

Interviewer - **Why did you eventually sign on?**

It was obvious I could not make payments any longer. I had been avoiding my lender when I called Don. He suggested I speak with them and told me Second Wind Consultants could handle my situation. My attorney told me to file for bankruptcy, Don told me, “Don’t.” The whole bankruptcy word sounded crazy and Don gave us hope. He is a very strong, typical Northeastern guy who tells it how it is. I also had a very open discussion about Don’s past. That probably impressed me more than anything; he has a lot of integrity and character, I was willing to trust him.

Strategist - **Constant communication helped alleviate much of his concerns and doubts, we talked many times, and he was very thorough in investigating us and getting to know us. He made an informed decision once he was ready. He became confident we could do what we said and he knew we would do our best no matter what happened. We developed a trusting relationship before he signed on.**

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Don and Adam Duso showed me this entirely new pathway. They took over communication and just handled the situation.

Interviewer - **How long did the process take to complete?**

It was two long years before I felt like I “resurfaced.” You have to just hold your breath.

Strategist - **Over the course of almost two years, we conducted a workout with his lender, stripping half a million dollars of debt from the business and of course settled his personal guaranty successfully.**
Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

I received a totally unblemished background. Don and Adam Duso have a lot of confidence; there is no doubt these guys know their stuff. My credit and business was saved and my wife felt good because I survived relatively unscathed.

Strategist - We stripped half a million dollars from the business and now the story of how Second Wind and Adam Duso helped save the client is part of his motivational speaking to business owners. Additionally, his home and all other personal assets were saved from collection, and of course, the client did not go to jail. Because of this, his marriage is now much better than it was and he is free to enter into retirement with his wife without the stress of a defaulted SBA debt looming over his head.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

For four years I worried about my company. Thank God I listened to Don. Second Wind Consultants simply did as Don said and, “Handled it.” Once you talk to him, then you get it. I am a reference for them. I tell everyone who calls, “Don’t listen to your attorney; listen to Don. He will walk you right through. They will do the job and deliver as they say. Listen to them they will tell you the truth.”
**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I ran a business that designed interiors for horse trailers. Horses are emotional creatures and they perform better if they have a nice home. Things went south in 2008. My revenue fell by 90% in a three-month period. I had made payments for 2 years when I had to default. I still had almost a million dollars to pay and no revenue to pay it.

**Strategist** - *The Client came to us long after his business had failed and he had been in default with the bank and SBA. The business had experienced significant drops in revenue beginning in 2008 and eventually closed in 2010.*

**Interviewer** - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

No, I knew from experience the bank did not care about my life.

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I was married and 63 years old. My business was dying and I did not know what to do. It was probably most stressful for my wife. My stress was before I decided to close the business. Once I made that decision, there was little left I could control.

**Strategist** - *The client experienced a high level of stress making the decision to close the business. Once closed, his wife then carried the burden of the stress, uncertain about how they would pay the shortfall liability, and concerned that they would lose their home and end up in bankruptcy.*

*By the time the client had engaged with SWC, the loan had been in default so long that it was in the process of being transferred to the Department of Treasury for collection where additional penalties and interest are incurred and settlement is difficult and time consuming.*

*Additionally, the client had another business partnership that held some valuable assets. His life and his wife’s was a disaster.*

**Interviewer** - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I found Second Wind Consultants on Google. I was searching for SBA workout. I found the anecdotes on the website appealing. It looked like they knew what they were doing.
Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

At first, I wasn’t terribly confident. Don seemed to be the architect. Adam Duso was very responsive and he did what he said he was going to do. That helped make me comfortable. Since I had no better alternatives, I decided to go with them.

Strategist - **He had much doubt but was willing to work with us and see it through, he was resigned to the worst but the best materialized. He became more committed as he saw our plan unfold as described.**

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I spoke with the owner, Don, during my consultation. Adam Duso handled the remainder of the communication between the bank, and I worked with Adam Duso and Adam Gleason to compile what they needed when dealing with the bank.

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

I was able to pay a small amount of what I owed and walk away from the remainder. It basically becomes a life changing experience.

Strategist - **We were able to quickly engage with the client, talk with the SBA, reorganize his personal balance sheet including protecting some of his personal assets and the assets in his partnership. We then settled the debt for pennies on the dollar and avoided any collection from the Department of Treasury.**

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

Second Wind Consultants showed me how flexible my situation could be with the right coaching. I thought they were very creative and professional once they got engaged. They got the job done. It would have been very traumatic had my wife and I not been able to work it out with Second Wind.
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

My Story is classic. I expanded my business just before the recession. The recession and downturn took a huge toll on the business. Let me be blunt. I have failed in a lot of things, but never in a situation where I could not live up to a financial obligation. I used to think, let’s grow for growth’s sake.

Strategist - He owned two industrial laundry facilities. He had expanded by taking on a large sum of debt just before the economic recession. The downturn in the economy resulted in lower hospitality (hotels and resorts) booking rates, which decreased their need for laundry services. The decreased revenue quickly resulted in the client and the business not being able to meet all the obligations of the company.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

I had been in negotiations with my lender for two years when I contacted a relative who worked on the board of directors at a Texas bank for help. He knew someone who had been helped by Second Wind Consultants and recommended them to me. He told me, “The bank doesn’t like those guys so maybe you should give them a call.” The bailout was supposedly intended to encourage banks to help business owners, but it was just lip service. I am still bitter about that.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

I hated it. I have never found it acceptable to be only marginally successful. I was working, but without results. I had to cut back a lot. I could not take spontaneous trips to Maui like I had during the good times. I was pouring money into my company and getting nothing in return other than stress and worry. I went from feeling like the best dad to feeling like I was letting my family down. I thought, everything I have touched before turned to gold, so why is this happening?

Strategist - He was the sole earner for his family of four, which included one special needs child. His home and all of his personal assets were all at stake if the company failed. The effects of owning a failing business were taking a toll on the client’s marriage. The client hadn’t taken a paycheck in months, was behind on his mortgage, and was about to lose his business. Life was very difficult for him.
Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

After speaking with my relative, I searched for Second Wind Consultants on Google. I am a really simple guy.

Interviewer - **What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?**

I researched the company online and found some things about Don before getting involved. He was very open about his past and the issues I presented. Don valued my opinions when we spoke. He was very open and very revealing. I was impressed with his candor and commitment. I believed I could trust him. I had no options and decided to go with him.

He gave me a blow-by-blow of how the process would go and how the bank would respond. I had experienced having my ass kicked around the block, so I figured, “It is what it is.” He eventually proved to be 100% correct in everything he said would happen.

**Strategist** – The client spoke with Second Wind for almost two years before signing on as a client. Throughout that process Donald Todrin stayed in contact and helped the client walk through what would happen next and how the bank would act. Despite his resistance, the bank responded exactly as Don had predicted at every turn and as things got worse, reluctantly, the client signed on.

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

I was very combative at first. I wanted Don to be wrong. As the process continued, the bank responded almost identically to how Don had originally explained. It shocked me and I was amazed at the insights Second Wind Consultants provided and the results of their actions. They really know their game.

**Strategist** – The client was resistant because he didn’t want to believe what Don was saying was accurate because he had so much at stake. But Don offered him a safe path, although a challenging one, and he committed to the journey.

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Adam Duso. He was clear and decisive, but also able to mold his strategies to the situation. Adam was really action oriented. He had a right-now-not-tomorrow attitude that I believe was a big contributing factor to how successful the workout was.
Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

I am saddened by the turn our country has taken, but there is balance to everything. I have a greater appreciation for that now. My businesses are saved. More importantly, I am a better business owner. I stopped making decisions based on not looking bad. Now if I cannot create value, I don’t do it. I now make decisions in a humble and judicious way. Most importantly my home life has returned to stability and I have a job that pays me well. I am happy.

Strategist – Second Wind and Kairos Capital were able to buy the businesses out of receivership, saving over 150 jobs, including the job of the client. We were able to strip over $5 million from the business and the client was able to keep his home, come current on all personal obligations, and keep all of his personal assets, not to mention vastly improve the relationship he had with his wife. In his words, it was a miracle. Everything promised happened although it was a very challenging and difficult course.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

I love working, creating value and getting results and Second Wind Consultants gave that back to me. I really appreciate how they took my business personally. The passion they showed is rare in the business world. I love what they did for me.
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I bought a pizza business in 2007 with an SBA loan. Four months after I purchased the business the economy crashed. I did everything I could to revise the business model and drive new business through the doors, but eventually, I just could not service the SBA debt anymore.

Strategist – **Client purchased a pizza franchise restaurant four months before the economic crash of 2008. Shortly after acquiring the business, he was faced with insufficient revenues to pay the overhead and meet the obligations of the SBA loan. This left the client responsible for a large amount of SBA backed debt with no way to repay.**

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

There was a lot of stress and pressure for about two years. Nothing was working and I was trying to figure out how to move on. Luckily, my family and wife were very supportive.

Strategist – **The client had one asset, which provided much of the revenue his family needed to survive on a monthly basis. He and his wife were extremely concerned that this asset would be liquidated for the benefit of the bank, leaving them no way to feed their children.**

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I came across Second Wind Consultants in a Google search.

Interviewer - **What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?**

I did not know what else to do. I had no real desire to save the business, but needed help.
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants took over communication with my creditors. They shouldered the burdens and reduced my level of stress immensely.

Strategist - *The business was liquidated for the benefit of the secured party. However, the liquidation of the business did very little to pay down the outstanding obligation owed to the SBA. The client was the sole provider for a family of eight and it was crucial to his family that we settle the debt amicably and affordably.*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Second Wind Consultants helped me protect some really important assets. They also helped me learn where I went wrong. If I could do it again, I would be more careful in what type of business I bought. I would work in an industry I know and minimize the amount of debt I took when starting the company.

Strategist - *Through a series of well-planned asset protection strategies, we were able to shelter his assets and settle the debt for pennies on the dollar. In the end, the client walked away from the business for affordable losses, was able to protect his sole remaining valuable asset, which fed and housed his family, and he was able to remove the stress of the SBA loan that was affecting his family life.*

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Adam Duso. He did a really great job. He made sure it wasn’t a difficult process. I was updated constantly so I never felt like any of the changes were “curveballs.”

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I’m glad Second Wind Consultants was there. It was well worth the money and I gladly recommend Second Wind Consultants to anyone who may need their help.
**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I took out an SBA loan from a small bank that didn’t follow the guidelines. The money I borrowed was specifically allocated and it could not be designated to anything new as the business evolved. I was in trouble from the beginning. I started the business in 2003 and was successful up until I took the SBA backed loan. That money was enough to really get the business moving forward, but without the ability to allocate funds where they were truly needed, it ended up causing my business to close.

**Strategist** - *Client ran a very unique business that sold one product, which was a new useful tool designed to help carpenters and construction workers.* Shortly after obtaining a loan to expand production of the new product, the economic downturn occurred and discretionary income for new products such as his disappeared. Additionally, the bank under-funded the loan, which was for a start-up, and therefore much of the loan was reallocated towards making debt service payments instead of increasing the revenue of the business.

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I lost my retirement and my home was up for foreclosure. I had been married for 45 years at that time, but it put a lot of stress on my relationship with my wife. I was developing health issues due to my advancing age and the stress of the situation. It felt like a greedy bank was taking away everything I had worked for my entire life. It was obviously very disheartening.

**Strategist** - *The man was 60+ years old and had pledged his home as collateral. His wife of 45 years was very concerned that they would lose the house because they likely did not have enough working years left necessary to purchase another home. In addition, the client was facing a chronic illness that would likely impede his future employability. His life was very challenging.*

**Interviewer** - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

I called the bank and got nowhere. Then I called the banking commission about my lender’s indiscretions. They were very uninterested.

**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Don and Second Wind Consultants online through Google.
Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I researched Don and Second Wind Consultants online and read reviews. Their website was very professional. With my home up for sale, I felt there was no point looking anywhere else. They had answers, experience, expertise and strategies; they had been around a long while so I felt it was a good bet.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

I began working with Adam Duso. He was very instrumental in the success of the process. He got me out of a very dangerous situation and kept me from losing my home.

Strategist - *Despite their marital and health concerns, we were able to stay on top of the small bank servicing the note and were able to protect all of his assets, including his home, and negotiate with his local bank to settle the debt for pennies on the dollar."

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Overall the bank was the big winner, but Second Wind Consultants really helped me out. They saved my home and saved my marriage. This process has made me distrustful of any lending institution, but I am glad I could trust Second Wind Consultants.

Strategist - *While the business did not survive, we were successful in bringing a conclusion to this matter before the man hit his planned retirement age, allowing him to enjoy his retirement years in peace with his wife - in their home."

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

Adam Duso. He was very knowledgeable and quick to communicate with me whenever I had a concern. He was very committed to my issues and really cared about my family and me.

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

Second Wind Consultants is very professional. They stayed right on top of my situation and I am thankful. The bank was not my friend, I needed outside help and I am very pleased I got in touch with Second Wind Consultants. After being treated so poorly by the bank, I was incredibly impressed that Second Wind would take such a caring and protective position and really fight for me and my family.
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I bought my business just before the recession began in 2008. My cash flow started to slide negative and I began looking for help. I truly did not understand the market I was getting into.

Strategist - *Client owned a specialty print company and a commercial building, which he purchased in 2009. The local economy took a turn for the worse and his niche market contracted greatly.*

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I was facing bankruptcy and I really did not want to go down that route. There was a very high level of stress. My wife and I were both owners and we watched as our first business together failed. We had to cut way back just to make our monthly bills. We put vacations, hobbies, home repair, and our lives on hold.

Strategist – *With no way to pay the debt and the client rapidly approaching retirement age, the client and his wife were all but resigned to the fate of bankruptcy before they came across Second Wind.*

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

I called the lender. They told me to file a bankruptcy so they could move on to the next “deadbeat.”

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I received a cold call from Second Wind. I am thankful they called me, because I had no idea what to do or who to turn to.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I spoke with them and then explored Second Wind Consultants. After a lot of discussion, I signed on.

Strategist – *The client was skeptical after speaking with Don, but, with his only other option being the devastating effects of bankruptcy, he decided to try the process.*
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

I wasn’t real confident it would work out as well as they told me it would. The plan seemed far too good to be true. Duso has changed my opinion mostly, I am still a realist at heart, but he is a very confident individual.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I am still working with Second Wind Consultants, but their plans have been working. I only have a few issues outstanding and I will be able to walk away from my obligation still standing tall. By and large it worked out well so far and most of the process has been completed. It will be a great day when it’s all over, but right now I am quite satisfied with what has been accomplished so far.

Strategist - *We worked with the creditor to surrender and then lease the current commercial space, were able to reorganize the business and reduce his debt to a fraction of what was owed, despite the influence of his commercial real estate. Additionally, the clients were able to keep all of their personal real estate, including their primary home and their rental properties throughout the settlement process. The clients were able to retain their salaries, keep all of their assets, and are now headed into retirement without the burden of the SBA debt.*

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

Adam Duso. He was very knowledgeable and confident.

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I feel fortunate that a company like Second Wind Consultants was around to help when I needed it. I was amazed that they accomplished so much.
Salon
Florida
Single with a newborn

Debt Load: $300,000
Debt Forgiven: $290,000
Creditor: CIT Bank

Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I obtained an SBA loan to purchase a salon in Miami. Within months, four of my stylists walked out and opened their own salon a few blocks away. The payments on the loan were high and I had half the staff needed to support my new debt. Over the next eight months, I spent my entire savings trying to keep the business alive. I had just divorced and was a single mother with a newborn child.

Strategist - **Client was a single mother who bought a successful hair salon just before the recession as a way to help improve the quality of living for her and her child. Shortly after buying the business, the recession hit, her employees left and the business was faced with much smaller revenues.**

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

It wasn’t good. My baby wasn’t even a year old while this was going on. I couldn’t sleep even when the baby did and I wasn’t eating. I lost the baby weight fast and my health began to decline. It was devastating. I felt depressed. I should have been enjoying my new son, but instead I had to figure out how to pay the bills. Everything I had worked so hard for simply disappeared. It was terrible.

Strategist - **This newly single mother was losing sleep at night and working all day with no way of improving her situation or repaying her defaulted debt. Additionally, she was not spending nearly enough time with her then newborn son.**

Interviewer - **Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

I called the lender, but they were not interested in helping me.

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I was researching bankruptcy online and came across Second Wind Consultants. They offered an alternative to bankruptcy that was much better.
Interviewer - **Why did you eventually sign on?**

I was skeptical at first. I called Don, but I still wasn’t convinced. My landlord was at my door constantly asking for payment and the SBA was threatening to shut me down. I had to take a chance on something and I chose Second Wind.

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

All of my fears got reduced. Second Wind just found a way to make it better. I began to work with Adam Duso on a solution rather than focusing on all the problems.

Strategist - *Once she hired SWC, she was able to allow us to handle her creditors while she worked a normal amount of hours, slept at night, and spent some quality time with her son.*

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

I can’t say I am back to where I started, but things are much better. I still have crap credit and no savings to speak of, but I sleep at night and am a better mother to my son. I have a business and can pay my monthly expenses. I now know that where there is a will, there is a way. I will never give up. Second Wind doesn't just save your business, they teach you what went wrong. I do things differently now.

Strategist - *Through our workout, we were able to strip the business of approximately $290,000 and now the client has reinvented herself and teamed up with a well-known franchise in order to open a new, successful salon.*

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

Second Wind Consultants literally saved my life. I was able to keep my business and I can now be the mother my son needs.
**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

Nobody told me the economy was going to die. When the economy tanked, we had just obtained a large construction loan. We couldn’t make our numbers any longer. The business was growing, but 50% slower than projected.

**Strategist** - *Client was one of two business partners who invested heavily into an upscale pet hotel and grooming center. Shortly after completing their build out, the business was not meeting its projected revenues. She had to default on her loans.*

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

It was bad. I had many businesses before, but never had a problem. I felt shocked, like I had been programmed for success and then was facing failure. I knew I needed help as soon as the economy tanked and we missed our first numbers. I was in a romantic relationship with my business partner. The failure ended both sides of our relationship.

**Strategist** - *The clients then borrowed an additional million dollars from close family members in order to support the business through its start-up period. Additionally the clients/business owners drastically reduced their lifestyles including liquidating all personal real estate and other personal assets in order to support the business. Despite the heavy level of investor support and the efforts from the owners, the business did not experience the revenues necessary to support the overhead and the SBA debt.*

**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I received a call from Second Wind Consultants. For some reason, they stuck. I decided to scope them out.

**Interviewer** - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I felt they had potential.

**Strategist** - *The client contacted SWC and was skeptical but had very few choices. If the business failed, she would have lost a lot of money borrowed from close family members. It would have had a lasting impression on her family. She decided to take a chance, what more could she lose?*
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

I’ve never done anything so hard. It was very emotional. I leaned on my mother for support a lot. I had to make hard decisions and listen to someone else tell me what needed to happen to my business. I cried every night, but it was sort of like giving birth. I had to do everything for the business; it wasn’t about me. There were times when I thought the plan would fail. I thought on those nights I might kill myself. I listened to Adam. I borrowed clothes from friends instead of spending money and really reduced my lifestyle. Amazingly it all worked out, just as Adam said it would.

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

Adam Duso. He was wonderful.

Interviewer - *How long did the process take?*

I worked with Second Wind Consultants for two years to save my business and to save my life.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

They saved my business. They kept the doors open and now it is slowly growing once more. The business is still there, so I am elated. Second Wind Consultants totally changed my life. I know I will get better. I have a roof over my head and a job. The idea of not having a job at my age was very scary.

Strategist - *We were able to reorganize the business and settle the outstanding personal obligations for pennies on the dollar, preserving the family investment and freeing the business owners of the stress associated with the SBA debt.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I am very grateful for Second Wind Consultants. I think they are miraculous. They were a huge relief. Knowing Second Wind Consultants is out there, I would be willing to start a new business even now.
I have now worked for Second Wind Consultants for over four years. When I met Donald Todrin, I was working as his personal banker at a local branch. I asked him what he did for work he told me something quite unusual. He said, “I save families, one business at a time.” I nodded my head, smiled, and had no idea what he was talking about. Years later, I left Citizens Bank and took a position with Don at his company, Second Wind Consultants. Don again told me the mission of the company was to save families, one business at a time. I thought the statement was grandiose and corny and did not understand how removing debt and restructuring cash flow had anything to do with families.

I began by working with two other colleagues to learn the process of being a business consultant. After a reasonable amount of time, I was given a new client that had just signed on. With supervision, I worked as the point man for this new client. It was a retail business in Texas owned by a man and his wife. The wife clearly resented the husband now that the recession had occurred and the business could not support the loan. They invested the small retirement they previously built and took a large loan for working capital. Now the business was in jeopardy and the stress had caused a strain on their personal relationship.

As the workout progressed, I learned that the wife took their two children and moved to her mother’s home. The business was beginning to default to vendors who lived in the community and she could not face her friends or neighbors. By completing our work, we removed the stress and hopelessness they felt. The clients were able to coexist more easily and rebuild their relationship. The husband called to thank us after and I finally understood what Don had been saying since I first met him. Second Wind saves families with every business we preserve.

By accomplishing for small business owners what nobody else is able to, we remove the stress, the feeling of loss, the hopelessness, and the fear associated with unsupportable, overwhelming debt. I have been fortunate enough to work on hundreds of cases. Some clients were strictly business while others reached out to me for emotional support, but in the end, every single case proves the same thing. What we do has a much greater impact than removing debt or showing a client how to better manage their business. We impact families, and we change lives. This sounds grandiose, but there is no humbler version of the truth.
I enjoy every challenge and every battle. I take great pride in the phone calls we frequently get from clients thanking us for giving them back their life, or for the emails we get from that ninety year old pro bono client who attached a picture of her company’s employee party where they celebrated not having to downsize thanks to our efforts, or for the Christmas card signed by a client’s daughter that says, “Thank you for helping my daddy.”

Who else has stories like this? When people are young they pretend being the super hero. I don’t wear spandex and a cape, I don’t have a super power, but I still get to help people in my own way.

I am very thankful for my position with this company and for the opportunity my career provides. I am always proud to tell people I am a strategist at Second Wind Consultants, and I am proud to say that Second Wind saves families, one business at a time.
Interviewer - *How did you get into financial trouble originally?*

I had a successful company with a partner. I decided to open a wholesale company to drop ship the product designed by my first company to retail locations. Everything went well until the recession hit my company. The general demand for our product slowed down substantially, as our main service was supplying toys to major chains. Additionally, the larger stores such as Wal-Mart and Target began negotiating our terms lower and lower and our company could not make a profit. At that point I began to default. First I defaulted on my vendors, then my personal credit cards that I used to support the business, and finally my secured creditors.

Strategist - *The client came to Second Wind with a business in serious trouble. He had mixed finances between his failing entity and his solvent company and created a completely untenable situation. The lender was aggressive and wanted to put a receiver into both companies and start immediate liquidation.*

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I was buried under a mountain of debt. There was an amazing amount of pressure. I’d never struggled like this before. It wasn’t just about the business; it affected my marriage and my health. I was over one million dollars in debt. I remember looking at my wife’s face when I told her that. At that moment she checked out. She realized she had no power to change it and that was sort of the end of our marriage. I recall discussing that moment in marriage counseling. It was really ugly. She had met another man and had an affair.

I was getting sick. I couldn’t eat from the stress. I had to go to the doctor and was told I have a low blood cell count. I was so thin my doctors said my life was at risk. My kids were devastated. This was a really intense time. Creditors were making threats and every day for months was a struggle.

Strategist - *He was always friendly and ready to laugh. If I had not needed to know his whole story to complete his workout, I would never have guessed at the pain his debt had caused him. He is a truly strong man.*

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I needed to do something, so I looked online and found Second Wind Consultants.
Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I took a leap of faith. I really liked Don after our consultation. I have owned a series of businesses since I was 17 and I am 52 now. Don had a similar history of owning many businesses so I knew he could understand who I was. He let me do a payment plan that worked for me. There just seemed to be something in Don I could trust.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind took enough of the pressure off that I could go out and make more products in my profitable entity. They restructured my business so I could liquidate the bad entity and hold on to the profitable one. Adam worked closely with Don to construct the strategy. They helped me get to a place I could focus on what really mattered.

Strategist - *We immediately pushed the lender back and bought the time needed to restructure the business management to keep his entities separate. We found a passive investor who in turn created security that buffered the valuable entity from collection. It was a miracle plan and it worked flawlessly."

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Adam Gleason mostly. I liked Adam. We have had some very long talks. He is very intelligent. There were times when Adam would be able to talk me out of a situation I was not sure he had ever encountered before. At those moments he would work with Don to evaluate the current strategy and make sure it was still viable. Second Wind and Don Todrin are for real. Adam was able to really execute the vision.

Strategist - *There were many moments where a creditor would take an action that I needed to handle in the heat of the moment. In those situations, after I had dissolved any immediate threat, I would turn to Don or Peter to bounce ideas off and create a new strategy. There is no background experience that truly prepares one to complete workouts on the level Second Wind operates."

Interviewer - *How long did the process take to complete?*

Adam Gleason and I worked together for more than a year to save my company and several years after to protect my personal assets from collection.

Strategist - *I worked with this client for several years. He had a complicated and unique situation and it remains some of my best work as well as one of the stories I often relate to when describing to new clients just how many twists and turns a workout can have.*
Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

I now run a successful company doing what I love. I was able to secure what was important to me and get myself out of a no win situation.

Strategist - *The client works with his daughter in a new venture they started just before the workout process began. It seems to be successful and I often receive email advertisements for his new products.*

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

Second Wind Consultants gave me information I didn’t have and a plan that worked for me. Thanks to this process I made it through all of my personal and professional struggles of that time. Now I know there is nothing I can’t overcome. Now I am calm and so my family is comforted by that stability. When there is a problem anywhere in the family, they call me. They wonder how I am so calm. They don’t understand I already came through the worst.

Strategist – *He is a staunch supporter of the work Second Wind does. He is a valuable reference for the company and I consider him a valuable friend I have earned through my work with Second Wind.*
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I opened a tanning salon in 2007. I spent most of the next two years ramping up and investing the profits of the business back in for expansion and marketing. In 2010, our revenue began to slow down and by 2012, the business was barely breaking even.

Strategist - *The client opened a tanning salon for her husband to run. New York changed the laws regarding what services and products tanning salons can offer and effectively cut the client's revenue in half overnight.*

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

They would not help.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

The stress involved had a huge impact on my family. From a stress perspective, it was horrendous. My husband would scream if you looked at him cross-eyed. My back was up against a wall.

Strategist - *She was in a tough place. It was obvious her marriage had suffered tremendous strain through her financial issues. I worked to reassure her that we had a way to help.*

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found them online.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I had been working with a different consultant at the time. Our relationship had been like oil and water. Any time I would ask a question, the consultant would provide evasive answers or not answer at all. I was hesitant to try another firm, but Second Wind Consultants had good reviews and I had no choice.
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Adam Gleason quickly built up my confidence. The hardest part was working to find someone I could sell the business to for the benefit of my lender. I hated asking for help. In the end, Second Wind Consultants came through and produced a buyer. After that was handled, the process seemed to get much easier. There were many bumps in the road. The lender was very difficult to work with. I had to fight the lender in court. That was very stressful, but Adam walked me through every step of the process.

Strategist - *The client spent a lot of time asking questions and inspecting my knowledge and experience. She had been burned once and was determined not to make the same mistake. An investment firm we are familiar with purchased the assets of the tanning salon so the client could address her personal liability.*

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Adam Gleason. Adam was awesome. I have nothing but good things to say about him. I was even able to reach him while he was on vacation with his family. It was a pretty emotional time and he was always there to reassure me that everything would work out. He always called me back and he still does even now, almost two years after my settlement was approved.

Strategist - *The client and I still communicate. Questions about her taxes or the ramifications of a business decision she is planning to make come up occasionally and I try to offer her the same dedication I did when she was a paying client. Some times we just discuss how we are. She is a great woman.*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I came to Second Wind Consultants with a no-win situation and they found a way to win. I am relieved of the debt and am able to move on with my life.

Strategist - *We managed to remove the debt for a small settlement with some of the money she had. We did not try to save the business. The client was ready to let it go before she ever called Second Wind Consultants.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

It is what it is. I had to refinance my mortgage to pay my settlement, I had put all of my personal money in the company, but I am in a much better place now. My family is still feeling the effects of the business default, but we are in a good place now and moving forward. I am thankful that Second Wind was there to help me through this painful experience.
**Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I took out a $730,000 loan to buy a custom design and printing business. By 2010 the economy was in free fall and the slim margin we had operated on disappeared completely. Every month we were under water. My partner and family friend tried to support the business personally as my wife and I had no reserves, but he ran out of money before the economy came back.

**Strategist - The client and his wife obtained SBA financing to buy a custom printing business for their daughter and her friend. They invested along side a family friend and additional guarantor. The business was never highly profitable, but the daughter loved working there and had many dreams of how to recreate the business for the younger generation. The client’s wife worked in the shop in addition to her regular employment with their daughter and it was a bonding experience that worked perfectly for a time. Unfortunately, they, like so many others, bought the business just before the “Great Recession” and the numbers began to slide.**

**Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

Asking CIT for help was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life. The agent on the other end of the phone spoke to me like a child with a learning disability and essentially told me I was idiotic for even bothering to call.

**Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

I struggled every day to try and find a way to recoup the losses we were suffering. I worked my own job while the situation was occurring, but the lender just continued to get more and more aggressive until I was afraid we would be left with nothing and nowhere to turn. My wife has a high income, but we have high expenses from when life was good. The bank was clearly targeting her. It was scary, without her income it would not have been enough to support our bills.

**Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I found Second Wind Consultants online.

**Strategist - The client and his wife contacted Second Wind Consultants through our website.**
Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

I was very skeptical. Being told they had a strategy to save the business and remove our personal obligation without filing bankruptcy sounded about as plausible as being told they could teach me to walk on water. I signed on in the end after a long conversation with Don and Adam Gleason. They had real answers to every question and explained that there really was a systematic way of dealing with an SBA guaranteed loan in default.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

They immediately came across as a professional organization and took over communication. It made a world of difference. Speaking with Adam taught me a lot about how I should have been looking at this loan. I realized I should have cut the chord earlier. He gave us piece of mind.

Strategist – I contacted CIT, the lender, and was able to salvage the business because the assets were all leased items.

Interviewer - How long did the process take?

Adam had everything resolved within a year despite the obstacles CIT decided to put in our path. At times it was very stressful, even with Second Wind’s help. Negotiation is a process and I wish there was more to get updated on so the waiting didn’t feel so long in between each major event. Sometimes Adam would tell us the next major update on our case would take more than 30 days to occur.

Interviewer - Which strategist handled your workout?

Adam Gleason handled our case and that of our partner. He was an extremely effective representative as well as being a very nice man. He truly cared about us and was fearless in his approach and working with the bank. He was always upbeat and confident and always believed he would win. He did.
**Interviewer** - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Everything they said they would do, they did. CIT forced us to deal with the SBA directly and I learned that is unusual. They really put us through the ringer, though they accepted our partner’s offer very quickly and we have similar financial situations. In the end, Adam got us out for a fraction of what we owed and the business still employs my daughter.

**Strategist** - *The lender approved the partner, but wanted the client to pay four times what we offered. We refused and CIT sent the client to Treasury collection. At Birmingham, I was able to secure 20k less than our original offer of 50k.*

*They are now great references, the daughter is still running the business and they always send me a Christmas card. CIT was informed they obtained an offer almost half what the lender rejected, and CIT was forced to remove the lien from their personal residence.*

**Interviewer** - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

They came through. I mean they really, really came through. That is something I am very appreciative of. I held them at their word and inspected their actions. I’m very happy with how Second Wind Consultants has taken care of our issues. We had some questions months after our workout was over and Adam made time to discuss anything we needed.

I would also like to give some advice to my fellow entrepreneurs: I wish someone had contacted me before I found Second Wind Consultants. Do not hesitate to pull the trigger. Get help as soon as you can.
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I opened a franchise with my husband. He is a veteran and actively employed by the US Air Force. I have special dietary needs for medical reasons and we had to drive far to obtain the right foods where we live. We opened an area where organic, healthy foods could be obtained. Unfortunately, we overestimated the popularity of our product within our geographic market. After fourteen months we realized it was not working and shut it down.

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

The lender helped us liquidate our assets and sell the equipment back to the leasing companies, but they did not help us personally with the SBA portion.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

The stress was destroying my health rapidly. I hired attorneys to deal with the problem. They told us there was no rush to deal with the SBA, that we could wait and see what would happen. They said the economy was so bad that the SBA would not process anything even if we had a plan of how to pay them. I went back to school. By the time I finished school and was earning a living as a teacher, the SBA had come back in force. They told me they were going to take my earnings and my home. I was later informed the SBA had been trying to reach us since we defaulted, but using a previous inactive address.

Strategist – *She was a DRS (Debt Relief Services, our non-profit division) client that Norm brought to my attention. She had an extremely touchy situation and he was unsure how to proceed. Norm charged me with doing anything possible as I had the most experience dealing directly with the SBA.*

She was a teacher with many medical issues including a condition that forced her to have a specific diet that no store in her area supplied food to satisfy. Her food costs were over 1k per month for her and her two children because she had to drive two hours to a store which met her needs.

Her husband was an air force pilot and veteran who flew classified missions. The debt issues threatened to force the family from their home, as there was a lien attached and equity in the property. In addition, the husband would lose his job if there were any financial issues attached to his credit report, as his clearance to fly would be revoked. If that wasn’t difficult enough of a situation, one of her two children is severely mentally disabled.
Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

We tried to speak to a bankruptcy lawyer, but he was no help. I found Second Wind Consultants under a search for “debt relief” using Google.

Interviewer - What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?

My first reaction is to never trust anything on the Internet, but we were so desperate, I was willing to try anything and they offered a free service for people like us who could not afford to pay a fee. The lenders were really cracking down.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

The SBA had sent us to a collection firm and we were stuck in a catch-22. Adam Gleason got the SBA agree to a very small payoff amount, but we still needed to refinance our home to pay the agreed upon value. The lender would not lend with the SBA lien in place and the SBA would not release without payment. We thought we were stuck.

Interviewer - Which strategist handled your workout?

Adam Gleason. He was a big help. He was always responsive and understanding. He made us feel like his only client even though we weren’t paying them. That was really nice. It never took more than a day to get a call back. He checked in regularly with his progress.
Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Our house had dropped in value by 50%. We were about to be foreclosed on and living on the street. I was in panic mode. I remember thinking, “If they take my house, where are my teenage children going to go?” This is all we have. The house and the memories it contains. Adam broke through the corporate red tape and convinced the lender to fund the settlement. I still do not know how he did it. It’s like magic to me.

Strategist - *I was able to find contact information for the underwriting department at a traditional lending firm. I explained that by issuing new money, we could settle the SBA loan and therefore the new financing would be in 1st position on the home in which the equity was contained. Even with such direct logic, it was a struggle to get an underwriter to violate their procedures in any circumstance.*

*We obtained approval even with the lien on the property and used that approval to complete an SBA Offer-In-Compromise, which was paid by the equity in the home. The payment prevented any loss of employment for the client’s husband, permanently removed the threat of foreclosure, and eliminated chances that the lender would show up in the future attempting to collect through different means.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

We tried to open a small business and it didn’t work. We almost lost everything because of that choice. Second Wind Consultants just knows how to deal with the SBA. I have been married 30 years and this was the most scared I remember being. There was a lot of anxiety involved. Every time we thought we were in the home stretch, something else came up. Second Wind Consultants made it end. I found them by chance, but I am very thankful I did. They really listened to my story and Adam got it done.

Strategist - *This client is a fighter just like her husband. She held it together even when she had a family that relied on her to be strong and everyone who should have been a useful piece of her support structure failed her. You should be able to turn to an attorney or your lender for some type of support, but there is often nobody to turn to when you have financial trouble these days.*
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I made the mistake so many others did. I bought a business with SBA backed funds during the bubble and when it popped, so did any hope I had of making a profit or even surviving. I put all my personal funds into the business, but it barely sustained the business enough to limp along for several months.

Strategist - *The client was a DRS client. We took on the case free of charge because asking him to pay would have simply made his situation worse. He was a husband and father of six. It was important we find a way to help him keep his home.*

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

You feel like a failure. You can see so clear the mistakes you made in hindsight, but as with all things, you have no chance to correct them. You can’t sleep and you spend so much time worrying about your issues that you miss meals. Your health takes the hardest hit from the stress. My house was collateral for the loan. I was terrified of losing it. I have six children and would have had to relocate them. How do you ask someone to take on that much additional burden? I was desperate. I am a fighter, but I was near the end.

Strategist - *The clients in DRS like this one have the highest level of stress, who are over the edge and constantly trying to figure out where they are going to land. They cannot even consider what solutions exist because they are busy trying to identify family members to borrow lunch and dinner money to feed their families. This client was a father first, and the stress of not being able to provide for his family seemed like it could break him at any moment.*

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I was searching for help on the Internet and came across their website.

Interviewer - **What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?**

I had given up hope, but I saw that Second Wind Consultants had a program that helped people even when they couldn’t pay. I had seen ads like that before, but I called anyway. It was like a ray of hope.
Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Adam was a lifesaver. He guided me step by step through the process.

Strategist - The client and I spoke for several months. He had a tough schedule so we often spoke on the weekends when he had time. I remember laughing with him because he could hear my oldest daughter laughing while I pushed her swing and I could hear his daughter trying to get his attention at the same time. All of my work is personal, it has to be, but this case bit home immediately, and at times, it felt like I was fighting for my family, not just a client's.

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Adam Gleason. He was great. He did everything short of doing my portions of the work for me. He spent a lot of time making sure he had answered every question I had and that I was comfortable.

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

I was able to provide an offer for pennies on the dollar of what I owed. Most importantly it was an offer I could actually find a way to pay. Adam was as good as his word. He came through bid time and got me back on my feet.

Strategist - I was able to help him construct a successful Offer-In-Compromise package. Not only was he released personally, but the lien was removed from his home as well.

I received this client's acceptance from the SBA by email on a sunny morning. I remember that I got such a burst of energy seeing the document, I had to take a short walk outside in the sun before I went back to our basement office. I sent him an email with the document congratulating him on working so hard and achieving success.

That evening while I was driving home I received a phone call. It was completely incomprehensible. The person on the other side was crying into the receiver. After a moment, I recognized the voice as the client got himself together. He said, "I had to call you. No one else I know would understand this moment. I am leaving work. For the first time in so long, I am truly leaving work. I am going to go home and hug my children and my wife. I am going to remember how to be a husband and a father again. I am going to sleep tonight. When did sleep become so rare that I see it as some special event? Thank you for giving me back my life." You do not get calls like that very often or in many professions. It is a truly powerful moment.
Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

They are so supportive; you almost forget they were offering services for free. They know what to do, how to package it, and what to offer. I no longer have this “Thing” over my head ruining my life. They are real and their results are real. I went through their program and it works.
**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I opened a small business with an SBA backed loan. My business started to struggle as soon as the economy began to decline in 2008. When I opened I was unique, but within the first two years, I had four major competitors in a two-mile radius from my location.

**Strategist** - *The client tried to run an inflatable playground in his area. When he began his business, he had 100% of the market share, but that did not last long. When the economy began to slide, so did his revenue, and competitors opening in close proximity sealed his fate.*

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I was in a really tough financial position. My house was on the line. I spoke with lawyers who advised bankruptcy, but I wanted to avoid filing a bankruptcy. When you start a business, you are sure you will set the world on fire. What people do not tell you is that being an entrepreneur is hard. There is so much that is left out. Taxes and hidden fees and all these people you have to pay that you never knew were there.

**Strategist** - *Like most clients, this man was consumed by fear. He had been battling with the SBA and Treasury for years.*

**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Second Wind Consultants online.

**Interviewer** - *What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?*

I had no problem reaching out for help, but had experienced bad results in knowing who could help me. I took a chance on Second Wind Consultants.
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants has a structure in place. They immediately began to guide me through exactly what I needed to do.

Strategist - *The client was already in collected by the US Treasury when he contacted Second Wind Consultants. We had no time to waste and the client was very responsive. We were able to get right to work.*

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Adam Gleason. He told me exactly what I needed to do. He was great.

Strategist - *The client was a father of a young son. I spent a lot of time discussing the impact this had on his family. One of the hardest conversations I have experienced was trying to answer him when he asked, “How do I tell him that I cannot buy what she wants for Christmas this year?”*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I had been working to resolve my debt for so long. As soon as Second Wind Consultants got involved, Adam resolved my case in less than four months.

Strategist - *I not only resolved his personal guaranty, but also obtained a discharge of the lien against his residence.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

Second Wind Consultants has the connections and the experience. The SBA does not go away, you are on the hook. I am very thankful I found Second Wind Consultants and that they have a program to help even people who cannot afford to pay them like me. They were fantastic. Adam Gleason is as good as it gets.
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I used SBA backed funds to buy a business in 2007 before the financial crisis. I was able to survive well enough until 2010. In early 2010, my business took a huge downturn. I bought the business from my landlord and was in serious litigation with him over a non-compete issue.

Strategist - *The client bought a business that created a special substance which coats the insides of hoses used to move caustic chemicals and gasoline. The client’s business was in trouble because his landlord, who was also the previous owner, misrepresented his plans and intentions. The owner the business with a non-compete clause to prevent competition in any form for three years within a large geographic area. The landlord then opened a business with the primary address exactly four feet beyond the perimeter of the non-compete area and then operated from a satellite location two blocks from the sold entity. In addition, he began calling the clients of the business and telling them that he would give them large initial discounts to change suppliers.*

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

The litigation was costing me a large amount of my personal savings. I was stressed out and unable to focus on my professional or personal life. I sold my assets to another company and began to work in more of a managerial role for this secondary entity. That saved my business from being closed immediately, but it did not solve the issue of the massive unpaid debt I was facing. I felt helpless, like the walls were closing in on me.

Strategist - *He was a fairly calm man, but it was obvious the stress was getting to him.*

Interviewer - **Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

My lender’s only help was suggesting I liquidate my company, file bankruptcy and learn from my “experience.”

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I researched the Internet to find a group who knew about the SBA. I found Second Wind.
Interviewer - **Why did you eventually sign on?**

Second Wind Consultants came off as too good to be true and a little slick, but when it came right down to it, they clearly knew what they were doing.

Strategist - **He had already restructured his business when he came to Second Wind Consultants, but did not have any way to resolve his personal obligation. We knew how to best handle this.**

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Adam was very helpful. I was really impressed. He began speaking with the lender immediately about my debt issue and allowed us to set the pace of everything.

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Adam Gleason. He was very responsive, direct, matter-of-fact, but appropriately empathetic.

Strategist - **I remember speaking to his daughter on the phone one weekend while he ran to the door to get the pizza he had ordered for a father-daughter movie night. She helped me pick what colors to paint the flowers on my oldest daughter's dresser. That dresser is still my daughter's favorite piece of furniture. We take a personal interest in our relationships with our clients.**

Interviewer - **How long did the process take?**

It took ten months for Second Wind Consultants to resolve the issue.

Strategist - **I was able to obtain his approval in less than a year.**

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

They got me out of a huge jam and I certainly learned a lot.

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

I got really good results. I would tell others to reach out for help. You can find a way out of your dilemma if you seek out the right party. You can survive and eventually thrive again. Thanks to Second Wind Consultants I am on the way to thriving once again.
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

My husband and I searched for two years prior to purchasing a business. We had done well in our employment and wanted to create a new source of revenue that would eventually be able to operate independent of our management and provide a retirement nest egg. The property was for sale, which allowed us the opportunity to build equity. We chose a franchise with a solid business structure. It left less chance for making mistakes through inexperience in the industry. We sat down with Corporate and went over the business model in detail. After deciding to move forward, we obtained a $1.6 million SBA backed loan. We had to invest our entire 401k as operating capital for the bank to approve the loan.

The problems began immediately. The franchisor chose a location that was too small and could only be built out to operate on fifty percent capacity. This meant our revenue was half what we had calculated. In addition, the numbers we were provided were inflated. We ended up in default and lost the business.

Strategist - The client was lied to by the franchisor and then given a space inadequate to make a profit. They had no chance from the beginning even if the economy grew instead of falling apart.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

My husband worked six days per week from open to close. We would have family come to work for free on their days off just to try and operate. We could not afford to pay any staff. It was horrible. We eventually had to fight with Corporate to get them to take back the franchise. We are in a lawsuit against Corporate. It was bizarre. The SBA was not interested in speaking with us, just in getting their money. It was hell on earth. We had lived our entire lives debt free, now we had three kids in college and we were not sure we could keep them there.

Strategist - Both the client and her husband were overworked and tired prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants. They felt beaten, but I took the battle over and saved them from further loss. The damages were severe.

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

The lender was not willing to help. We had to use lawyers for everything. We hired three sets of attorneys and fought with both the lender and the franchise for six long years.
**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I wanted the battle to end so I decided to check the web. I found Second Wind Consultants’ website online.

**Interviewer** - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

We drove to the office and met with Don face to face. Don understood, we were just trying to do the right thing for everyone involved.

**Strategist** - *I did not get to meet the client when they drove up, but I was able to meet her several times after. We value face-to-face meetings and frequently fly our clients in to meet with us for this purpose, to create trust. We created a trusting relationship, which supported us throughout the workout.*

**Interviewer** - *What happened after you signed on?*

Adam took over. He knew exactly what to do. It took a lot of pressure off me. My husband was working twelve-hour days to keep us fed and clothed six days a week and you simply can’t continue to live that way. He began immediately working with our lender and working with us. I was amazed at the number of documents and pieces of information he asked for immediately.

**Strategist** - *I began gathering information immediately. I asked for everything I could possibly need right away. I remember the client asking if they needed to send me blood samples next. The data collection process can be uncomfortable; we need to know your whole life, even the mistakes. These clients were good sports and we got exactly what we needed. This way we know what is exposed and what we need to protect, we also can learn much about what happened so we can be best prepared for the workout negotiation.*

**Interviewer** – *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Adam Gleason. He did everything Don said they were going to do and he got me to laugh at a time when I was not sure I could.

**Strategist** - *The client was a good sport. Eventually we got her to a place where she was comfortable and would joke. She was remarkably funny once the stress was removed. We build confidence and trust and this helps us work through difficult times.*
Interviewer - *How long did the process take?*

It took about nine months.

Strategist - *This workout was not easy. Both the client and her husband had a history of being high earners and the SBA does not consider putting their children through college as a necessary expense. We had to fight this offer through every step of the way.*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I am very thankful I found Second Wind Consultants. They got us out of hell and made the process much simpler. If we didn’t have a strong marriage and family to help us, we would have divorced because of the financial strain. Second Wind Consultants solved that. They saved us.

Strategist - *The client kept their home and her marriage. The three kids have all graduated college now. The most important thing we accomplished happened as soon as she signed on. We were able to calm her down and take away the task of dealing with belligerent lender contacts. She was a different person as soon as she could pass off the responsibility of handling this matter.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I will not ever own another business. I don’t take anyone at his or her word anymore after the franchise lied so blatantly, which is sad. Mistrust colors everything. That is why we had to drive and meet the men at Second Wind Consultants directly.

Strategist - *I know this client enjoyed the conclusion to her workout. She called me from a local gas station a few weeks after we provided her a successful conclusion. She had been driving up to deliver us cookies she had baked as a thank you for our services. Unfortunately her car would not start. I went and stayed with her for a time at the gas station. The cookies were delicious.*
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I opened a new car dealership with my brother and then the economy tanked. I had another business so I had to sign as the guarantor to be eligible for a loan for the new business. It was not long into the recession before we started missing payments and getting collection calls from the lender. When we continued to miss payments, we got letters directly from the SBA.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

It was very different than what I was used to. We kept getting calls and letters, but there was no way to fix the situation. There was simply not enough money to keep the business running and to pay the SBA backed note, even when I stopped taking a paycheck. I was scared about losing my business. I was scared about garnishment. I was scared to death I was going to lose everything I had worked my whole life for.

Strategist - The client came to Second Wind Consultants very close to being sent to the US Treasury for collection. Working with the Treasury is not like working with the SBA or a lender, it is a very hard place to be successful and it is always much more expensive than dealing with a lender. He had every reason to be worried.

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

The lender wouldn’t work with me.

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Second Wind online when I searched for SBA compromise.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I spoke with a few people before Second Wind Consultants. I was on the fence because I knew it would cost more money to hire a company like Second Wind Consultants. I decided on Second Wind Consultants because they seemed reasonable, professional, and had a lot of referrals I could speak with.
Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

Adam began to speak with the lender. He arranged a settlement with my lender, Resource Capital. Resource Capital was then shut down by the feds. It was a stressful time for me.

Strategist - I began working with Resource Capital immediately. The client was detailed and responsive and I was able to get an offer together within the first week of involvement on his case. We obtained a tentative approval from Resource Capital just days after submission, and the workout seemed to be on a good track. When the SBA had Resource shut down, everything changed.

Interviewer - Which strategist handled your workout?

I worked with Adam Gleason. He was very responsive. He made sure I stayed in the program even when I was losing hope.

Strategist - The client was appropriately nervous after Resource closed down. There is no real system in the SBA for these types of events. He just had to hang on and let me use my experience and contacts to find his file.

Interviewer - How long did the process take?

It took almost two years to solve my situation with the issues surrounding Resource Capital.

Strategist - I spent over a year playing, "Who's on first" with the SBA. We finally managed to get a rep I had worked with in the past to oversee his file and make a determination of the offer. It was approved immediately after we got the review to take place.

Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

Now the weight of the world is off my shoulders. I'm totally relieved. I'm not going to have to shut my business down. It's like I just started over again. I got 'em off my back.

Strategist - The client kept his business and paid 1.6% of his outstanding balance. You don't get a better settlement than that.
Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

There were times I thought I had been scammed because of how long the process was taking, but now I am very appreciative of Second Wind Consultants. At the end of the process, they did what they told me they would do. They got me off the hook.
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I had three subway restaurants that were doing fine and decided to open two more. I opened them just as the financial crisis began. The numbers were not adding up right from the beginning. To open the new locations, I had high interest loans on both locations. The interest was too high and the loans were secured to the entity that owned my profitable locations as well. I was told the name ‘Subway’ sells itself. I never imagined having restaurants fail.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I had to take my daughter out of private school. She was very uncomfortable being taken from her friends and thrown into a public school setting halfway through the year. I stopped paying my mortgage payment so I could afford the loan payments. If we lost the businesses, we would lose everything. We did not even go out to eat anymore. It was like a nightmare every night trying to sleep. It was like having an elephant on my chest, I couldn’t breathe. I started thinking about closing down, moving in with relatives and filing bankruptcy.

Strategist - *Both the client and his wife were at the end of their rope. They had been through a lot of harassment from their creditors. I remember the client explaining that he was afraid to walk his dog because the collection agent told him they could take it for his payment. The situation had gotten far out of control.*

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

The lenders were loan sharks charging me 15% interest. They were waiting for me to fail.

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

My brother owned a Taco Del Mar and had used Second Wind Consultants in the past.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I was very confident with my brother’s recommendation. He told me they would be able to help me even though I did not have any SBA backed debts.
Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Adam began to speak with the lender. I did not have to deal with the calls anymore.

Strategist - *I began communicating with the creditors right after the client signed on. It was important to remove him from the line of fire to decrease his level of stress. It also calmed down the creditor. They knew I was not going to respond to threats.*

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Adam Gleason. We had an extremely good relationship. I would speak with him five times per day. I was very worried.

Strategist - *The client was very nervous. He needed me to be available to take his calls as much as he needed me to solve the problem. I do not think he would have hung on if a day went by that he could not reach me. We spoke on weekends as well so he would stay calm until the workweek began once more.*

Interviewer - **How long did the process take?**

It took almost seven months to complete the workout.

Strategist - *The workout took longer than I expected. The creditors had no SBA backing, and therefore any losses they took went right to their bottom line. I had to really work at proving my client’s inability to pay before they started thinking logically.*

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

After the help from Second Wind Consultants, I was able to keep all five restaurants. I am doing much better now.

Strategist - *The client still has his business and it is now thriving. His daughter is back with her friends in her private school and the family is able to live a normal life again. That was the goal, to reset their lives back to a time before their financial mistakes threatened their family.*

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

A lot of companies out there promise the world but don’t deliver. Second Wind Consultants is not one of those companies. Everything they said they’d do, they did. I think this book is a great idea and I would like a copy when it is complete.
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I secured an SBA loan to buy the business I had been working in for years. In 2004, the state laws concerning worker's compensation changed, making it very hard to receive payment on those claims. More than a third of our business relied on worker’s compensation claims so we lost a large portion of business very quickly. I started paying late, then using my personal savings to pay the SBA backed loan. In the end, I simply ran out of money. I came from a family of entrepreneurs; it just made sense to have my own business.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

It was bad. I tried to file bankruptcy and couldn’t. I was pretty distraught and lost a lot of sleep. I was working feverishly to keep the patients I still had. It was so destructive. I’ve never experienced anything like that in my life. I had dutifully paid back the loan for months. Shame was the biggest emotion for me.

Strategist - The client had been punished by CIT bank. I have had many cases with CIT and they are a very tough lender to work with, but they took a particularly brutal approach to this client. I am surprised and impressed by the strength and will he displayed before and during the workout process.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

The lenders offered no solution other than to pay.

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I performed a Google search at 2am one night because I could not sleep from the stress. I searched debt workout and found Second Wind Consultants.

Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

I watched Todrin’s videos online and decided to come in for an interview. I was in such a pickle that I had nothing to lose. I didn’t have a choice.
Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Adam worked with me to restructure my business and submit an offer to the bank. CIT was difficult to work with; they did not even want to work with Adam.

Strategist - **The client and I had an uphill battle.** First the lender had a representative who kept being injured in ways that were hard to accept. She was hit by a vehicle first. Next, less than two weeks after her return, her manager informed me that we would have to wait again as she was attacked by a bear. I was not sure what to think so I researched the woman online and found the paper article about her attack. She left the bank three weeks after her return and we had to wait for another rep.

After that, we had to deal with the head of workouts. The woman and I had locked horns previously and this workout was no different. She is tough and aggressive, but we were able to prevail.

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

I worked with Adam Gleason. I wanted to negotiate, but knew I could not do it alone. Adam helped me see that this was not a personal situation; it was professional, which helped me stop feeling ashamed. Adam is fantastic. He brought such a sense of calm. He had a very grounding effect on me. Adam has excellent communication skills and is very professional. I felt I was in very, very good hands with him.

Interviewer - **How long did the process take?**

It has been almost four years and still ongoing. We are in the last stages of negotiation now, but it has been a very long drawn out process. If I ever get another loan, it will not be with CIT.

Strategist - **The client began with Second Wind Consultants in 2010.** CIT bank has tried to force his file to the US Treasury for collection three times since we began and each time we have had a hard fight to save him. The bank has voluntarily blinded themselves to the logic that he cannot survive if he does not work. We have had to ask the SBA to directly intercede on more than one occasion to rope in the lender and keep them working within appropriate guidelines.
Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Adam saved my business and is going to obtain an approval on my offer. We have had to fight, but I have no doubt we will be successful.

Strategist - *The client was rewarded for his patience with excellent results. We were able to save his business. He had very specific state guidelines to work around and it was very difficult to get the lender to sign off.*

*We are currently working on the Offer In Compromise. The lender attempted to dump this client for personal reasons and we were forced to disclose to the SBA that it was my belief these actions were directly related to his same sex relationship, as the lender investigated an expense relating to his partner helping him pay rent. The SBA is now scrutinizing the process and I look forward to a response shortly.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I realize now that there is no shame in the situation. That has taken a long time. There is skilled help out there; it is not the end of the world. It takes longer than you might anticipate and you have to set aside money to do a workout, but it is very fair. I would certainly encourage any struggle business owner to give Second Wind a call.
Harry Greenhouse
Senior Strategist

My journey with Second Wind Consultants began in the autumn of 2009. Everywhere you turned, it seemed like the end of the world was unfolding before your eyes. Of course, this was not a biblical prophecy, but the Great Recession in 2009 hit, widely considered to be the worst since World War II, and we were deeply involved in saving businesses that were affected by the financial downturn. I knew from my first day on the job that Second Wind was a unique and special organization.

Don’s absolute, undying devotion to serving his clients’ needs above all else was one of the first impressions made upon me. In addition, the bottomless pit of small business acumen that Don had accumulated throughout his life was evident throughout all of his interactions with clients and coworkers alike. I thought to myself, “Wow, what an opportunity.” I wanted to learn and absorb as much as humanly possible through osmosis in the office space.

My initial conversations with clients, small business owners facing insurmountable financial hardship, were sobering to say the least. There were banks foreclosing on their homes, landlords locking them out of their businesses, and judgments piling up faster than they can keep track. Most were consumed by panic and fear, those two intense human emotions that often cloud one’s judgment and inhibit proper decision making. No doubt about it, these people needed assistance. They needed experienced, battle-hardened warriors who have truly seen nearly every possible scenario to guide them through the troubled times and realities that they faced: declining revenue and unsupportable debt.

Being on the front lines of small business warfare, I have the experience and confidence to forge game-changing strategies that help our distressed clients get back on their feet again. I relish the initial strategy calls with a new client – at the beginning, it’s clear they’re paralyzed by fear and scared of the unknown. By the end of this call, after hearing the confidence and know-how exuding from our voices, they are struck by our prowess and exhibit a new found sense of hope that was previously absent.

Second Wind has taught me that you can be successful at what you do, while also serving a greater purpose. The work that we do here in these four walls allows us to embody our values while also succeeding at a very high level. I am more than fortunate to have the ability to work here and help those in need.
Marketing Agency
California
Married with children
Debt Load: $170,000
Debt Forgiven: $125,000
Creditor: Santa Barbara Bank & Trust

Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I ran a marketing business that was hugely impacted by the economic crumble. There is just no way to defend a business from something like that. My clients had stopped putting money into their advertising budget due to cutbacks. When the collapse began, I started to do what all business owners do. I began my own cutbacks.

These efforts eventually failed. I got sick and could not work for weeks. There was no hope of recovery after that.

Strategist - *Part of the reason why her business was unable to support the debt was due to a serious illness she had contracted. It totally knocked her out of commission, and of course the bank was not helpful or sympathetic.*

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

The worst part was the embarrassment. My husband is in finance and I have always had good credit and never missed a payment before. We were shocked to find the business going south so quickly. My husband was stunned, the business was just so upside-down.

Strategist - *Her husband was a limited guarantor, but he had significant income/net worth. Her huge concern was that the bank wouldn’t settle due to his income, even though he was a 'limited guarantor' – a key detail.*

Interviewer - *Did you try to work with the lender to solve your situation?*

I contacted my bank about refinancing my loan. They told me, “You have no options.” I had already paid down about half of the $300,000 I originally borrowed, but they still were not willing to refinance my loan. Every month I struggled to find a way to pay my note. I was stuck. I couldn’t pay my staff and a payment that was over $5,000 each month.

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I went online and after extensive research, I found Second Wind’s website. My husband and I both thought it was too good to be true. I found some negative reviews online, which I now acknowledge must be pushback from the banks.
Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

My business was in default, I had lost 50% of my revenue, the lender was not working with me, and I had a lien on my home. I could not refinance because the housing crash had wiped out my equity, so my only option was Second Wind. When I obtained my loan, there was $500,000 in equity in my home. There was none by the time I tried to refinance.

I saw all of Don Todrin’s content. He has an impressive public presence. He is constantly blogging, doing radio shows, giving talks, and educating the public. To expose himself to that degree, he must know what he’s doing.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

Second Wind Consultants provided me with a structured discipline I wasn’t used to. I spent the first four months in limbo and it took almost a year before my business was turned around. I remember thinking I had paid about $15,000 to Second Wind and I wondered if they were going to be able to deliver the results they had promised.

At one point I spoke with Gleason. He was not my strategist, but he was available at the time and spoke with me. That discussion helped me feel better about the process. I think that conversation is what stuck with me the most.

Interviewer - How long did the process take to complete?

My strategist Harry worked on behalf of my company for a year.

Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

The slate had been virtually wiped clean, that’s what Second Wind Consultants did for me. My debt was removed, my business was operational and my credit was not harmed.

As soon as Harry called the bank it was like a weight was lifted off my shoulders. He handled all the calls from the bank so I didn’t have to. He saved my family. My husband and I were worried we would have to pull my daughter out of college because we could no longer afford the payments, but none of what we feared happened.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

Harry was with me every step of the way. He was invested in my situation and me. They really proved to be a savvy, professional firm.
Internet Service Provider
Pennsylvania
Married with children

Debt Load: $2,000,000
Debt Forgiven: $1,000,000
Creditor: Susquehanna Bank

Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I had a seller take-back agreement from my previous partners. I signed the document when I was barely out of college and agreed to pay way too much. The economic hardships of 2009 occurred and the payments became unsustainable. I made my second mistake in trying to appease my former partners. I made sure to pay them at the cost of paying my SBA backed loan.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

It was awful. My former partners really used my inexperience to take advantage. I had young children and I did not want them to see what was happening. My wife and I had to cut every personal expense just to keep a roof over our heads. I was stressed. My biggest fear was seeing a debt collector show up at my home where everyone could see. It was a very traumatic period; there were a lot of things I would rather have not gone through.

Strategist - One local creditor (former partner) actually sent the sheriff over to “tag” his personal assets (couch, television, etc.), as a harassment tactic.

Interviewer - Did you try to work with the lender to solve your situation?

I still don’t understand why my bank wouldn’t even try to work with me.

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I received a call from someone at Second Wind Consultants.

Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

The information he gave me struck a chord. I thought it was clearly too good to be true, but I had to try something. I was desperate.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

Second Wind Consultants immediately started to educate me. They showed me a different road. They were always very straightforward and honest with me. Harry told me what could happen and then what would happen.
Interviewer - Which strategist handled your workout?

I worked with Harry. He really put me at ease. It sounds cliché, but at the worst points Harry would keep telling me, “Don’t give up. We can do this.” It really helped to get me through.

Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

I was able to keep the business and work through the challenges. They saved my home and cars. They made it happen. All of my debt was personally guaranteed and they kept it from damaging the stability of my life.

Strategist - In the end, our process allowed him to save everything that was important to him.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

Things can turn out a lot better than you think if you are willing to let them help you. Second Wind Consultants made things much smoother. Overall it was a pleasant experience, they provided us with what we needed.
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I began a promotional products distributorship in 2006. I began the business with personal funds, a line of credit, and a large SBA backed loan. The first three years were good, and then the economy crashed. I was too highly leveraged to deal with my rapidly declining revenue stream. Eventually I defaulted on my SBA backed loan.

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

I tried to arrange a new payment plan to reduce my monthly payment amount until my business stabilized. Suffice it to say that they did not accept my proposal.

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I really did not want to file bankruptcy, but did not know what to do. The lender was preparing to liquidate my business, and even when that was done, they informed me, “I was next.” It was scary. I have a wife and son employed through my business. We had stopped taking vacations, found ways to extend the life of our vehicles instead of buying new, and worked only with cash. We were going to lose everything if we didn’t find a way to solve our problems.

Strategist – *We had to be on point every second, as the cost of failure was too great.*

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Second Wind Consultants online.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

They really seemed to know what they are doing.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind immediately fielded all questions from creditors. We got to stop dealing with the calls and the stress. That alone would have been worth the cost.
Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Harry primarily, but Greg handled my credit card issues.

Strategist - *There was a lot of work to be done on this case so we attacked the problems from two separate angles to maximize the effectiveness of our strategies.*

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

It was a hard process to work through. A lot of it was a shock. There was a lot of emotional stuff, but we just had to deal with it in a way that wouldn’t ruin our marriage. Every time the business was failing, all I could do was worry about my wife and son. Second Wind ended the problems. They taught me to expect the unexpected.

Strategist - *We ended up being extremely successful; the client restructured in a way that allowed him to cut costs tremendously.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

They are as good as advertised.
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I worked with my brother in his businesses. He does not have good business sense. I wanted to help him because my father started the business in the 60’s and it had great sentimental value. My brother’s sloppy business practices combined with the economic recession caused the business to decline. We had lost two of the three stores before any action was taken.

Interviewer - **Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

I had no luck obtaining help. I will never be involved with another SBA loan. I will find a local lender. Borrowing from the federal government is only a hindrance to business development.

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

I hated it. My mother-in-law’s house was collateralized. Even without being a guarantor to the loan, the stress I experienced was incredible. This loan could destroy people I cared about financially.

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

My brother found them online.

Interviewer - **What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?**

We needed to do something. If we filed for bankruptcy, my mother-in-law would lose her home. We felt like there was nothing left to lose.

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

The stress became more manageable. It helped to know someone was finally on our side.

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

Harry Greenhouse solved our problems. He was rock solid, excellent.
Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

The business is still running and is now profitable. My family and my father’s legacy have been saved.

Strategist – *The workout was successful, and he ended up saving many jobs for his wife’s family.*

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

They accomplished what we needed. Harry did what he said he would do.

Strategist – *He is truly a dedicated family man who knows the meaning of commitment.*
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

We have owned many businesses. We are life long entrepreneurs. This business just happened to be the first that ever failed. The market simply did not meet projections and then when the recession hit, we knew there was no turning it around.

Strategist – The client owned a small “mom and pop” retail & service store.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

Our house was collateral for the loan. It was stressful. These were supposed to be our retirement years. We were supposed to be working less, not more.

Strategist – The lender had a first position lien on their beloved home. When I say beloved, I mean that the husband basically built this home by hand. This was a 100% necessity of the workout; we had to save the home. If we failed, they would be shattered.

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I came across Second Wind Consultants in an online search.

Interviewer - What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?

We were facing bankruptcy and the loss of our home. I spent a month of back and forth conversations with Don on the phone daily. I had our daughter, a well-respected lawyer at a national firm investigate Second Wind Consultants. She validated what they are doing. She told us they think outside of the box. They integrate strategy in a way that continues to be viable in a business workout.

Interviewer - What happened after you signed on?

Harry took away our stress. Second Wind was able to give us a solution and some resolve; they led us to another way to continue to make a living. Harry was always accessible.
Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Harry Greenhouse. He has been very compassionate and professional. It’s funny how close you can feel to someone you have never met face to face. He was just so comforting when I needed it.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

We have almost reached the conclusion we needed. Now that we are at the end of the road, I can say they helped us weather the storm.

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I’m very appreciative of Second Wind Consultants. They were above and beyond what we could have hoped for.

Strategist - *I cannot stress enough the importance of their home. By saving their home, we saved their peace of mind and their family. We accomplished what was necessary.*
Interviewer - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I was working in metal recycling overseas. In 2008 the market crashed and my revenue took a hard hit. At the time I was dealing with restructuring my business for this new economic shift, I was working with a Chinese company who ran away and failed to pay me for a large shipment of metal. That transaction cost me about a half million dollars. Working overseas is treacherous and there were no laws I could use to protect me. I quickly got to a point that prevented me from paying the bank.

Strategist - *The client is a young professional family man, married with two kids. He ran a metal trading firm. A Chinese company failed to pay him a large amount of money in one deal. That deal completely tanked his business.*

Interviewer - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

It was bad. This was my first business. I had opened it in 2004, and I had been able to grow it for years until it was grossing over ten million dollars. I was forced to close the business and became really depressed. A few of my informal partners tried to help me, one of them just left without ever paying me what was owed. It took until 2012 for me to come back to life and decide to deal with the problem.

Interviewer - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

By the time I had gotten myself back together I was too far in default for the bank to even consider helping me.

Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

Second Wind Consultants called me. They said my name was on a list of people who had SBA backed loans. After that they told me what they did and I knew they could help me.
Interviewer - Why did you eventually sign on?

I was pretty ready to sign on after the first call, but I called and had a consultation with Don. He knew exactly how I felt and gave me an idea of a plan they would execute to help me.

Strategist – He needed to be able to climb out of this hole without filing bankruptcy. Fortunately, he found us.

Interviewer – What happened after you signed on?

I let Harry handle the lender. I did not want any part of talking to them. He took over from day one and never looked back.

Strategist – We were able to stay on top of the bank servicing the note and were able to secure all of his assets, including his home, and negotiate with his bank to settle the debt for a reasonable settlement.

Interviewer – Which strategist handled your workout?

Harry. He was really patient and listened to my story. He did exactly what he promised.

Interviewer – How long did the process take?

I don’t even want to think about it. The lender really dragged the process out.

Interviewer – What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

Second Wind saved my business. Now I am able to do it on my own. I’ve had too many experiences with people messing me over to trust another partner. Second Wind really helped, but I will never work with another Chinese company or partner. They may not all be like those I’ve dealt with, but it is not worth the risk you take.

Strategist – We were able to get a fairly aggressive settlement to take care of the personal guaranty without our client getting sued, and without the need for bankruptcy.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

Second Wind Consultants provides an amazing service.
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I took out a 1.5 million dollar SBA backed loan for my husband’s dental practice. We had so much going on. I am a former federal auditor and had been able to run the practice on an extremely thin margin. In 2008 we got the rug pulled out from under us. We were both children of “business families.” This was the first time we had been in this type of trouble.

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

I remember that one day our pastor stopped us and asked what was wrong. He said he did not like seeing us like this. We were stressed and tired. We spent every day slugging it out as best we could. We had run our business with integrity and then someone comes knocking. Your chest tightens and your stomach sinks.

Strategist - *As we know, being in default and getting sued by creditors is a very stressful experience. Her debt issues definitely placed a great deal of stress on their family.*

Interviewer - **Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

I did not contact my lender, but we did hire a firm before working with Second Wind Consultants. We paid them over fourteen thousand dollars and they left the state without solving anything.

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I researched online to find a new solution to our problem. I gave them a call because they looked different from the usual consultants. For someone as experienced as I am, you really have to just say, “Am I going to fold up my tent, or am I going to fight?”

Interviewer - **Why did you eventually sign on?**

The last company had come highly recommended so I was hesitant at first. Don flew us to Northampton to meet his workout team free of charge and with no commitment, just to help us get to know us and to build some trust. That interview was the most important part for me. These people clearly wanted to help people in trouble.
Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

I was worried and scared. We had met Harry at his office so it was a little easier than I expected to let him take over speaking with my lender. Having Harry walk me through the process really opened up my eyes to a lot.

Strategist - **Having SWC step onto the battleground and deflect the calls from creditors goes a long way to ensure that our clients can achieve some inner peace during the process.**

Interviewer - **What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?**

We are still going through the process, but we are in a better place now. We had gone through marriage counseling before and this process brought a lot up again. You have to really know who your friends are and whom you can count on. I had sacrificed a lot for my husband's practice and now we were watching it fall apart. Harry saved the business. We reminded each other we had vowed for richer or poorer. It is easier now that we can see the end in sight.

Strategist - **Tens of jobs were saved, between the various dentists, bookkeepers, receptionists, etc. This was a home run.**

Interviewer - **Which strategist handled your workout?**

Harry is a sweetheart. He is professional, focused and pleasant. I cannot say enough good things about him.

Interviewer - **What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?**

When you get in trouble, you need to find your help in the trenches. That is where Second Wind is. They are digging in and fighting for their clients. When you are an experienced businessperson you know when to throw up the white flag and say, “I am here to listen and follow.” Second Wind leads you to safety.
From my first day on the job at Second Wind Consultants in early 2010, I knew that this company was different from any other. In the face of what has come to be called the “Great Recession,” Second Wind was fighting the good fight to save not only the businesses of our clients who were being crushed by massive amounts of debt and ever shrinking revenue, but the families that those businesses supported. The first thing I ever learned at Second Wind was not about finance or management, but about our company mission, the context that we hold and remind ourselves of daily; saving families one business at a time.

Throughout the last four years I have been involved in dozens of workouts, each presenting their own unique challenges. But one constant that runs through all of the workouts is the fact that our clients all come to us consumed by fear. They are on the brink of losing their businesses and have run out of options. Attorneys are telling them to file bankruptcy, their bankers are calling and demanding payments that they just cannot make, and they feel as though they are at the end of the line with nowhere to turn. It is truly rewarding to be able to step in and go to battle to save my clients’ businesses. With Don Todrin’s leadership, my fellow warriors and I have gained the knowledge, experience, and expertise to address and solve any issue.

I consider myself truly blessed to be able to do the work that I do here at Second Wind. We have found the formula for success with a higher purpose.
Veterinarian
Indiana
Married

Debt Load: $730,000
Debt Forgiven: $570,000
Creditor: CIT Bank

Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

My husband and I purchased a veterinary practice in 2008. The seller lied to us and screwed the numbers. He also became our competition right after the purchase. Coupled with the economic recession, the seller killed the business.

Strategist - The clients purchased a veterinary practice in rural Indiana back in 2008. They quickly learned that the financial information provided to them by the former owner was grossly inaccurate. Also, part of the purchase included a non-compete clause with the former owner, who told them that he was going to retire and had no interest in opening another practice, but immediately after the closing, the former owner did in fact open another practice just outside of the non-compete range, taking many of his former clients with him.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

It was a very difficult time. We were unable to pay our bills or our mortgage. We both worked at the practice and we had no idea what we could do to save ourselves. The stress was enormous and we were living in fear.

Strategist - The clients now owned a veterinary practice, which included real estate where they both worked and lived. They had a large SBA loan with CIT that they could not support because the revenue of the business was nowhere near what had been projected. Their first move was to hire an attorney to fight for them in court. After spending thousands of dollars in legal fees, this got them nowhere. They were distraught.

Interviewer - Did you try to work with the lender to solve your situation?

The bank would not even respond to our pleas for help. They completely ignored us unless they were calling about a payment.

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I received a call from Richard McGravey from Second Wind out of the blue. His call came at the perfect time. We were completely out of ways to deal with our issues.

Strategist - Second Wind Consultants cold called the clients and after some discussion, they signed on.
**Interviewer** - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

We were skeptical at first, but Greg instilled a tremendous amount of trust. He gave us the confidence to take that first step. It was hard to believe they could pull off what they described. We had few options, none, and so we decided to take a chance, Greg seemed so sincere; we were willing to trust him.

**Interviewer** - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind took over the process. They handled dealing with our lender and took away a huge portion of the stress we had been feeling. I was in debt over three quarters of a million dollars personally between all of my creditors, but it seemed like I finally had some security.

**Strategist** - *When they first came to us as clients, both of them were very stressed out. They didn't feel that they had anywhere to go and were fearful that the bank would foreclose on their business and their home. We worked very closely with them, holding their hands through the process, and over time it was clear that their attitude and outlook had changed. They were optimistic and believed that they would eventually succeed, which they did.*

**Interviewer** - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

Greg. He is an asset to that company and hugely talented.

**Interviewer** - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

I can pay all my bills now. It worked out as well as I could have ever hoped. We still have a place to live and a place to work, our employees have jobs and the crushing weight of the debt is no longer a constant presence in our lives.

**Strategist** - *We were able to find another Vet in Illinois that purchased the practice and the real estate, continuing to employ both clients. We then settled their personal guarantees for a small fraction of what was owed on their loan. I was fortunate enough to be in Indiana in the midst of the workout and I visited them at home. We had dinner together and formed a strong bond that has continued even after the workout has ended. The clients now have a bright future.*

**Interviewer** - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I 100% recommend the Second Wind program. I recommend it to anyone who is losing his or her shirt and wants help.
Sausage Manufacturer
Utah
3 Brothers, each with families

Debt Load: $2,400,000
Debt Forgiven: $1,500,000
Creditor: Mountain West

**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

My family’s sausage business goes back generations. My brothers and I decided to expand the company and move beyond the small geographic area where my Italian grandparents had started the company. Looking back, I realize our business plan had some serious holes in it. We obtained SBA backed financing to build a beautiful sausage facility. After about three years, it was clear the business had failed. Our total sales for each month were four hundred dollars short of our note payment and we had overhead to deal with as well.

**Strategist** - *The client and his two brothers owned a sausage manufacturing business in Utah. They had several secure loans with multiple SBA creditors totaling over $2.5 million in debt. The economic downturn hit their business hard as pork prices went through the roof and their customer base dwindled. They found themselves in a position where they could not support any of their debt and defaulted on their loans.*

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

It was very hard. My brothers and I owed millions of dollars that we could not repay. If that was not bad enough, it looked like we had killed a family business that had survived since my grandparents had created it. I never thought we would fail; I had never failed at anything. It was a very sobering experience.

**Strategist** - *The secured creditor was very reluctant to work with us. It was a small local Utah bank that was somewhat set in their ways. The clients were very stressed when they came to us. They felt that it was their personal failings that led them to the position they were in. Peter and I worked with the brothers to get them to understand that they were only one party to this deal, the bank was just as responsible, if not more responsible than they were for the position they found themselves in.*

**Interviewer** - *Did you try to work with the lender to solve your situation?*

Banks are bullshit; they are not on your side. They asked my wife to co-sign the loan. It sounded like they were going to ask to keep one of our kids until we repaid the loan. When you borrow money, you need to be worth something. It is all about what you are worth that day, but it is not the same when they come collecting. If you were worth what you had that day, they would just write off the loan for nothing. I told them they had believed in the plan also. I told them they had failed too. They did not care, all they knew was they needed to be repaid.
Interviewer - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Second Wind Consultants online.

Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I researched the heck out of them online before dealing with them. The company started with a man who had a checkered past. I liked that. I knew goody-two-shoes were not going to be able to fix my problems. We needed someone who had been around a bit; who had taken risk, and won and lost, a man of experience in battle; that’s what we needed.

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants was getting pushback heavily in the beginning. My lender truly did not want to work with them. I took this to be a good sign. The staff of Second Wind Consultants was always willing to hold my hand through parts of the process.

Strategist - *The attitude of the three brothers turned around and they became warriors, willing to do whatever it took to come out of this successfully. Second Wind led the way and succeeded.***

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Greg and Peter at times. They are both great guys and they worked with Don. Don’s life experience is what allows him to know how to do what he does.

Interviewer - *How long did the process take?*

It took years to finish the work with Second Wind Consultants.

Strategist – *For over two years, Peter and I worked with the client and their lender to arrange a deal for them to sell their business, retain their jobs, and continue operating out of the same building.*
Interviewer - What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?

I was able to keep the business. I did not lose my home or my job. They did exactly what they told me they would. Life goes on and I'll be ok. I was so happy, I shipped them a bunch of sausages on the house.

Strategist - In 2012, we reached an agreement with one of the clients' two secured creditors to settle all three brothers' personal guarantees for $25,000 each, discharging over $1.1 million in debt. The business name has been around for over 50 years and is a staple in Utah. Their sausages are sold at Utah Jazz games and across the southwest in grocery stores. We were able to protect their legacy and allow them to continue doing what they loved.

Interviewer - What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?

Let them help you. Second Wind Consultants do what they say. They provided us with what we needed.
Orthodontist
California
Married with three children

Debt Load: $1,700,000
Debt Forgiven: $1,500,000
Creditor: Various

Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I ended up with 16 different lenders and was unable to consolidate. Dental equipment is normally leased, so whenever anything needed to be replaced, I would find the lowest rate, which normally meant a new credit relationship. The lenders all wanted their money back right away, but I wasn’t making money right away. I had to wait for receivables to come through insurance agencies and there was never enough.

Strategist - The client is an orthodontist in CA. His issues are a result of owing many different creditors (over a dozen leasing and practice finance companies) over $1.2 million collectively as a result of building out his practice. When the economic downturn hit, his client base dropped significantly. As the majority of people do not have dental insurance, potential patients were putting off getting orthodontic work as they had less disposable income to spend.

Interviewer - **Did you try to ask your lender for help?**

The lenders all gave the same response. Pay us, or we are coming to get our equipment. I could not run a dental practice without imaging machines and dental tools.

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

It was an awful stressful nightmare. My lenders simply were not logical. I got weary of the process of dealing with them. I had to pay for everything in cash, as no one would lend to me anymore. Finally I got sued. That was not just bad, it was terrible. It was the hardest period of time I’ve been through in my life. It was horrendous. I wouldn’t wish what I went through on anybody.

Strategist - When the client came to SW he couldn't support a fraction of his debt service to his various creditors. The client and his family were very scared about what could potentially happen from creditors suing them. His wife was especially fearful of creditors coming after their family assets, as they have three small children that they were trying to shelter from their financial issues.

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

My accountant recommended Second Wind Consultants.
**Interviewer** - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

There were not a lot of people doing what Second Wind Consultants does and the other companies simply did not seem competent. Second Wind Consultants clearly knew their business.

**Interviewer** - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind got between the lenders and me. They went above and beyond. There were days where I had to go into court, and when I got home, all I wanted to do was drink an entire bottle of whiskey. They would tell me, you would survive this if you stay the course. Greg was like a therapist. I had one conversation with Gleason in the evening. He told me, “Look, our job is to save you. That is our assigned purpose as strategists.” That was a wake up call for me. These guys were there for me.

**Strategist** – *Second Wind addressed all of the client's issues and dealt with the creditors to ensure that all of his assets would be fully protected; this put away any fear that he initially had.*

**Interviewer** - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Greg. He was a comforting presence I needed in a dark time.

**Strategist** – *This was a tricky case that required us to approach our attack from two separate angles in order to implement our strategies.*

**Interviewer** - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

In the end, I chose to file personal bankruptcy against their recommendation. The process had been long and I was tired of fighting. Second Wind Consultants had already saved my business and helped me sell it to an outside investor and I wanted the shame to be over. They did everything I asked, and if I had stayed, they would have finished the job. Even when I chose another path, they supported me. They helped me file a painless bankruptcy.

**Strategist** – *Adam Duso and I worked with the client over an 18-month period to re-structure his business to keep it safe. He then filed personal bankruptcy in order to discharge all personal guarantees. It was great to see the change in the client’s wife from the first day that they signed on as clients through the end of the workout. At the end we triumphed. The business was safe and the creditors were all discharged. The family was happy and confident again.*
Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

You would assume that in this economic climate there would be more opportunities for people, but there really isn’t anything comparable to Second Wind. When I signed on I desperately wanted contact with someone who went through what I was going through, to tell me it was going to be ok. You feel so alone. Now I’d like to be that voice for someone else.
Interviewer - How did you get in financial trouble originally?

I bought two CPA firms in 2005 with my former business partner. The real estate market tanked and a good portion of our business revolved around being experts on tax law as it related to property. All of the markets related to real estate followed it down. My manager left with 50% of my clients and my partner left with the remainder. I was left with the businesses and the debt and no revenue to support either. It was nerve wracking. Failure is a part of life, but not in that magnitude.

Interviewer - Did you try to ask your lender for help?

There was no point. What were they going to say? You don’t have to pay us because you are down on your luck?

Strategist - The client first engaged an attorney to sue his former employee, spending over $100,000 in legal fees only to reach a $40,000 settlement.

Interviewer - What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?

I was up a certain creek.

Strategist - Prior to coming to SW, the client had lost a significant number of clients from both the economic downturn (many of his clients were in the construction business) and from a former employee who opened another practice and stole clients (despite the fact that she had a non-compete).

Interviewer - How did you find Second Wind Consultants?

I started to look for help. I found Second Wind Consultants online.

Interviewer - What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?

I spoke to Don Todrin and I liked what he had to say. His team is really great. My wife is a former insurance adjuster and a skilled investigator. We searched, but did not find anything we considered negative about the firm. The references were all real people and happy with the results.
Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

The team changed my entire thought process. Nothing like this had ever happened to me before. They showed me how business fluctuated with the seasons and how to adjust for the factors that occurred in each shift.

Strategist - *The client and his family were very nervous about this process when they started. The client is the sole breadwinner of the family and has two young children.*

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

Greg is my point man. He is a really good man.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

The fight is ongoing, but I have already gotten so much out of my relationship with Second Wind Consultants. My lifestyle has changed. I now spend less and enjoy more. The struggle makes you appreciate what you have. My marriage has gotten stronger as has my relationship with God. This process is making me a better person.

Strategist - *We worked with the client and the bank that holds his SBA loan in order to wind down his old practice and open a new CPA firm. The client still owes the bank a considerable amount on his personal guaranty, but we are in the middle of the Offer in Compromise settlement process with the SBA, and expect to reach a 5% settlement. The ultimate goal in this workout was not just to settle his personal guaranties and discharge all of the debt, but also to preserve the client’s job so that he can support the livelihood of his family. This is something we achieved successfully and the client has had the opportunity to build his business back up. He is able to continue supporting his family financially, and by working with Second Wind Consultants, we have relieved his family from an immense amount if stress and hardship.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

They’ve been a great help. I hope to be one of the references people call when I am done so I can let them know this really does work. I want to tell them what I have learned. They need to know that they should not be afraid. They should reach out to people who can help you. Redefine yourself, take action, and know that there are sunnier days ahead.
Interviewer - **How did you get in financial trouble originally?**

I bought an existing business that seemed successful. It became subject to circumstances beyond my control. These circumstances cause it to lose a huge segment of business from government budget cuts. Even when I took ownership in 2007 we had to struggle to keep our heads above water. When the recession hit, it was all over.

Strategist - *The client owned a housewares-leasing company in Austin, TX. When he purchased the business he had success for several years until he lost several key accounts, and virtually overnight his revenues were a fraction of what they once were. The client purchased the business with a large SBA loan that he could no longer support.*

Interviewer - **What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?**

I took a business that, before the downturn, was enormously profitable and in less than three years it had tanked almost completely. Life felt horrible. I knew my home was safe with Texas homestead, but everything else seemed to be minutes from slipping away. Sometimes you do everything right and it still doesn’t work.

Strategist - *One thing that was important to the client was preserving the business because it not only employed him, but also his brother. The client is a bachelor but his brother has a family and he wanted to make sure that he was able to provide him with a job so that he would be able to support his family.*

Interviewer - **How did you find Second Wind Consultants?**

I came across Second Wind Consultants in an online search.

Interviewer - **What made you sign on with Second Wind Consultants?**

Second Wind Consultants is the only business that does what it does. It is a much better path than bankruptcy, though no lawyer will admit it.

Interviewer - **What happened after you signed on?**

Greg got in the way of the lender. He played defense so I could think about how to fix my business.
Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I work with Greg Wales. He has been excellent.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

It has certainly given me hindsight. In hindsight I would have never bought the business. The seller lied about his numbers, the lawyer I used was not very good. I thought people were on my side, but they really weren’t and that included my attorney. Now I am in a rebuilding phase with the business. The new owner gave my brother and I both jobs, which was very important to me. Second Wind has done what they said they were going to do. I cannot say I am happy with the outcome because there has not been one yet, but I am confident Second Wind Consultants will come through, and when they do, I will be more than happy.

Strategist - *We were able to locate a buyer to purchase the business, relieving it from the burden of the monthly note service to the bank, and employing the client to continue running the operations. We are in the middle of an Offer in Compromise settlement with UPS bank that will result in a massive amount of debt being discharged from the client's personal guarantee. We are very confident we will achieve this result.*

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

Second Wind Consultants is a no-lose situation. If you need their help, there is no alternative and they truly care about their clients.
**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I adopted 3 children and needed to increase my revenue. I bought a bigger practice and took out SBA backed financing to do it. The former owner stabbed us in the back.

**Strategist** - *The client owned a dental practice in Florida. He had a large SBA loan that was obtained to purchase the business as well as a seller take-back note with the former owner who was also his landlord. The former owner of the business entered into a non-compete agreement when he sold the business, and quickly opened another practice just outside of the non-compete range, taking with him not only many of his patients but also employees of the business.*

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I had a lot of worry, stress and sleepless nights. The kids were eating me out of house and home. My children had gotten into some trouble and so I adopted my grandchildren. Being a parent at my age was more work than I remembered. If I did not have a good wife and family, I would probably be a divorced alcoholic by now.

**Strategist** - *I know that he was absolutely embarrassed about his business failing, and it put a lot of stress on his relatively recent marriage to his wife.*

**Interviewer** - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

There was no help to get. The business was dying. I don’t blame the lender.

**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I found Second Wind Consultants online.
Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I researched Second Wind Consultants. I spoke with Don and Harry. It was not really comfortable with so many kids at home to feed and a wife to care for.

Strategist - *The client is a strong family man who was having difficulty supporting his family financially when he came to us. He has three children in high school who are all going to college in the coming years, and the uncertainty of his financial future put a large burden on the entire family.*

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

Second Wind Consultants helped me rebuild. We had to lay off most of my staff, which was not fun, but Second Wind Consultants helped me with a plan to rehire more. It was a relief to turn over responsibility.

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I work with Peter and Greg. They are both great guys. Peter is very conservative, but I joke with Greg all the time.

Interviewer - *How long did the process take?*

It is still ongoing, but I now see black at the end of the month instead of pages of red.

Interviewer - *What were the results of working with Second Wind Consultants?*

Second Wind helped me open a new practice in a new location. My business is slowly building and I no longer have to worry about taking care of my family. My wife keeps the books and tries to keep me out of trouble. They have been very thorough.

Strategist - *Peter Tur and I worked with the client and his creditors in order to structure a business into a new entity that was out of the reach of his creditors, in a new location where he was no longer renting from the former owner.*
**Interviewer** - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

Second Wind Consultants is as good as they say. Call Don and sign up. They work not only with SBA loans, but all your other creditors as well. I could never have survived without them.

**Strategist** - By preserving his business we were able to save his job and allow him to run his business without having to pay a large debt service to his creditors. This put his family into a much better financial position and relieved a vast amount of stress. He and his family can now focus on what is important: finishing school, thinking about college, living a normal happy life with all of their financial issues in the rear view mirror.
Restaurant
Washington
Single

Debt Load: $652,000
Debt Forgiven: $492,000
Creditor: Washington Federal Savings

**Interviewer** - *How did you get in financial trouble originally?*

I owned a restaurant in Seattle and bought it with friends in a full partnership. The restaurant failed and I had an SBA backed loan that I had used to purchase the real estate.

**Strategist** - *The client owned a restaurant in Washington State that went belly-up. He was left with an unusable piece of real estate and a large note with his SBA creditor.*

**Interviewer** - *What was life like prior to contacting Second Wind Consultants?*

I had owned several successful McDonalds franchises. I went from doing really well in life to doing fairly poorly. I went from driving a Lexus to securing a vehicle strictly to make it from A to B. I worked every day of my life to get to where I was and it was all going to get flushed with the toilet water. I had been a fireman, a carpenter, and a construction worker. I was not afraid of working hard, but there were no identifiable actions to take. My partner filed bankruptcy and I was left alone facing collection.

**Strategist** - *The client has always been somewhat nervous; before he opened the business he was always successful and had high earnings. All of his assets were put into the business, only to see it fail. He was very depressed about his situation.*

**Interviewer** - *Did you try to ask your lender for help?*

I tried to sell the property to repay my loan, but the lender got aggressive and by the time I knew to contact someone like Second Wind Consultants, the lender was already liquidating the property.

**Interviewer** - *How did you find Second Wind Consultants?*

I had a friend who was currently using Second Wind Consultants and told me I needed to contact them.
Interviewer - *Why did you eventually sign on?*

I needed to make a change. I had lost several friends to cancer and other illnesses. My perspective changed and I needed to worry about survival and my health, not about making money.

*Strategist* - *The client did not want to file bankruptcy, as he is 62 years old and wants to preserve some kind of financial future for himself. We were able to instill confidence that he would survive, emerge, and succeed through this process, which he did.*

Interviewer - *What happened after you signed on?*

I was told I did not have to file bankruptcy, which was a big deal to me. I wanted to handle this without feeling like a quitter. Greg led me to believe there was light at the end of the tunnel and helped me see how to get there.

Interviewer - *Which strategist handled your workout?*

I worked with Greg. I really like him. He’s a real guy who cares.

Interviewer - *What do you think of Second Wind Consultants now?*

I am just looking to have a simple life now. I am 63. I have already traveled around the world and lived a full life. I live in California now where it is warm. I want health, and happiness now. I am no longer the richest man in the world, but thanks to Second Wind Consultants, I am looking at a bright future again. I highly recommend Second Wind Consultants. They’ve handled it really well. I only wish I knew about them sooner.
I do not have happy stories. I cannot provide storybook endings. When it comes to Second Wind Consultants, my line of work stays in the trenches. I am the last line of defense. When bankers are greedy; when they care not about their clients or their recovery value and wish only to shut down their client’s business to collect on the SBA guaranty, I am the one who is called. I am the lawyer. My job is to save the day and get the workout back on track, by whatever means necessary.

This, however, does not mean we don’t have success. We do. Our goal is always the same, but there are times when the men at Second Wind and I need to come up with creative solutions to get there. We must frequently break the mold and reinvent the process that has worked so well for so long; the enemy is never the same, and different strategies are required. Sometimes we must overcome blindly aggressive attorneys, other times we must negotiate with senseless bankers, and lastly, we must manage irrational and emotional private lenders.

The ruthless attorneys create a unique problem: the bank’s client is not their client. When a bank enters a lending contract with a debtor, there are fiduciary duties imposed on both parties. But when situations go awry and debtors default on their payments, the lawyers step in. They don’t care about helping the debtor and they certainly don’t believe they owe debtors any fiduciary duties. To them, it is just a numbers game. Their job is to maximize the return on the bank’s investment. If that means forcing a debtor into bankruptcy in order to allow the bank to collect on their SBA guaranty, so be it. I have seen lawyers who would rather push a debtor into bankruptcy than approve an asset sale that would save the business, allow the debtors to keep their jobs, and return the highest yield on the liquidation of the physical assets. Their duties do not align with what I believe the bank’s duties should be, and this can create a huge problem.

The stubborn banker is the most common barrier I face. These bankers are always presented two plans: their corporate policy and our strategic plan for maximizing asset value. Their plan involves lawyers, judges, court fees, auctions, auctioneers, sheriffs, storage facilities, and a number of other expensive and unnecessary counterparts. Our plan involves saving businesses, paying debts, maximizing return on investments, and indeed, minimizing loss. Yet sometimes, when faced with this seemingly easy choice, some bankers flatly refuse to accept our plan. What’s worse is that they could take months to respond and charge more money for the delay. This, too, is a problem.
The private lender is the most volatile of the lot because they do not have an SBA guaranty to ensure their financial wellbeing. They seem to forget that their investment inherently included risk, as all investments do, and that the risk became reality when their borrower’s business turned upside down. They seem to think that only the borrower should endure the loss, and they should be paid back in full. They yell and shout and often file suit to collect on their owed debts. Their emotions run high, their logic falls to the wayside, and they forget that a lawsuit judgment is worthless if they choose to let the business die. My job is to remind them, and implore them to accept our plan. Everyone will be better off.

After representing Second Wind clients for a long time, I have reached an inspiring revelation. I have not cracked the banking workout code, and I am prepared to admit that working with these lawyers, bankers, and lenders is frustrating, but day after day I put my frustrations aside because I believe in the Second Wind mission. I believe in small business, I believe in small business owners, and I believe in their right to reinvent their entrepreneurial formula after they have previously stumbled and fallen down. Hundreds of Second Wind clients have gone through this process and reemerged with a fresh new opportunity. Their debt was eliminated, their houses were saved, their families were preserved, and guess what, the banks were still paid off by the SBA. This was a mission I could get behind, and now, this is a mission I am dedicated to. I believe in what we are doing: saving families one business at a time.

By working with Second Wind, I have realized that its business is much more than just a stream of income. They are truly helping people in need. For that, I have learned to put my emotions and frustrations on hold, and I fight to defend the Second Wind mission every single day, and I win in the Second Wind style: doing what is best for the client, which is settling with the bank.

The truth hurts, and the truth is banks care only about banks, and financial loss is preemptively accounted for in their financial planning. While banks’ context is profit at the expense of their clients’ wellbeing, Second Wind’s context is broader, perhaps even more so than they perceive. They aren’t just saving families, one business at a time; they are reinvigorating the country, one family at a time. I am honored to participate.
Chapter 8
Debt Relief Services
The Non-Profit Division of Second Wind Consultants
Debt Relief Services
Second Wind’s Non-Profit Division

When I started Second Wind I ran into some very damaged small business owners. I was hearing from guarantors of defaulted SBA guaranteed debt; these were small business owners who had already lost their business and were fighting to keep their families together, their homes out of foreclosure, and somehow rid themselves of debt they could not possibly repay. They did not want to file for bankruptcy and they searched for a way to navigate their issues.

The banks were unwilling to help in any way and the pressure was unbearable on so many who had already lost their business and most of everything they had invested.

These men and women had no place to go for help and no assets remaining other than their home. They certainly had no cash or savings, or no reserves of any sort. They had been wiped out, yet the SBA was demanding a payoff of the remaining defaulted loan or suffer the consequences. This meant more loss, more unsupportable debt, and possibly the loss of their home and the disintegration of their families.

This all too often resulted in divorce, broken families, lost homes, and chaos for the children involved. It was a loss too painful and damaging to the families at risk for me to simply ignore and walk away.

Knowing we had the skills and experience to help these small business warriors, I knew I had no choice; I had to help any small business owner who called on us, whether or not they could afford to pay for it.

I asked Norman Schell to head this effort, and he handled hundreds of small business owners in dire need of our help, successfully engineering Offers In Compromise, for pennies on the dollar, saving many marriages, families, and homes without ever charging a fee.

His marching orders were:

“Give our best to any small business owner that asks for help, whether or not they can afford to pay.”

This was my commitment. Norm, myself, and all the workout men participated in serving this objective, selflessly supporting any call for help. Together, we saved hundreds of families from further destruction.

Here are a few comments from the many letters we received from those we helped
Greetings Norm!

Without your patience and assistance, I never thought my family would ever get out of DEBT ENSLAVEMENT! There was no hope and we could not find anyone with the knowledge and willingness to help us.

All we were getting was a run around from the bank and most lawyers said we were stuck or they didn't know anything that would help. It wasn't until my wife, Nanett, found your web page and we started to learn about the Offer In Compromise; and your willingness to help us, then there was a ray of hope in sight.

Even though it was a long process with many hurdles or mental trials. You were always there: when questions came up, you called the next day with an answer; when an unpleasant situation came from the bank, you explained everything clearly and gave excellent advise;

My wife and I owe you, your organization (Debt Relief Services) and your sponsoring body (Second Wind Consultants, Inc.) more than just thanks and praises. Please accept our gracious gratitude and THANK YOU for rescuing us and giving us back our life!

Again, thank you and may your work continue to be blessed.

Mr. & Mrs. K. O.
California
Dear Mr. Schell:

As you know this past August (2009), I was between a rock and a hard place due to a delinquent SBA loan. On top of that my finances were quite fragile. I was in need of professional assistance. With no known resources in this area I ran to the Internet and by the grace of God, the Second Wind Consultants URL popped up.
(This fit 100% into my non-existent budget.)

I cannot thank you enough for your expertise, professionalism and your sense of humor. I must tell you being guided through the necessary steps to honor my debt and being able to laugh in the process truly decreased my stress level exponentially.

What stayed with me most during this process was that you were offering your services pro-bono; yet you were consistent, responsive, patient and kind. Ironically, I am not certain how often all of those qualities are present when I am a paying customer. It is clear that you love your job and in today’s economic climate, that is a gift. Your willingness has saved my credit, decreased my financial burdens, provided security for my family and allowed me to maintain my integrity and for that I am truly thankful.

Based on what you have provided me, ‘thank you’ does not seem sufficient. However, what I want you to know Mr. Schell; I will pay your “good-deed” forward in my area of expertise. Presenting with the same patience, consistency and kindness! I don’t think I will be a match in the humor department.

You are a true asset to Second Wind but more so to humanity, I know you will be rewarded. All the best!

Ms. Beverly D.
New York
Additional Excerpts

- They are smart, organized, and willing to help. Norm would always contact me back within the day I called him when I needed help or just someone to talk me back off the ledge.

- Your extensive knowledge and expertise has been invaluable during this long and arduous process.

- Back in January when I did the Internet search seeking SBA help, I really didn't know what to expect. You gave us the blueprint for the entire procedure: what to say, what to write in the letter, not to mention all the forms you provided! When we got the recommendation from ‘the bank’ for the approval, all the stress of the last several years just melted away.

- Finally, after a year of stress and anguish, we can settle down and plan our future again.

- I'm not sure if you'll remember me but I feel morally obligated to write and thank you for your wonderful help toward resolution of my guaranteed loan with SBA.

- When I first spoke to Norm I told him I felt bad about not paying my loan back. He told me the bank had taken a risk as well when they bet on me, but I would be the only one to suffer so I should not feel bad. He also told me if I really wanted to show the bank how sorry I was then I could light myself on fire, but that I would still be the only one suffering. I really liked that statement.

- At the time, emotionally, it was a real lifeline for me. I would have just given up without your support. I do not know what would have happened to my kids if I had given up. I may have lost them. I am back on my feet and I am happy now.

These are but a few of the many letters of thanks we received from the many small business owners we have helped when there was nowhere else to go.

While this program, Debt Relief Services, was conceived out of serving my higher purpose, “helping those who cannot help themselves, saving families one business at a time,” the mission I was committed to, I must acknowledge Norman Schell, who took complete ownership of this mission and relentlessly and completely, committed himself and the resources of Second Wind to helping anyone who called us, whether or not they could afford to pay. This man cared deeply and delivered his best. He represents the heart and soul of Second Wind, and Debt Relief Services.
Chapter 9

The Marketing Team

Ken Elmer
James Balderston
Ted Grindrod
The Director

In the three years that I have been sending the Second Wind message across this country, I can honestly say that no one story stands out. No name comes to mind. I can really retell no sad tale. How could that happen? The reason: there are so many of them!!

Every year I talk to hundreds of business owners who feel that their businesses are on its last legs. The economy wins and their businesses are the losers. Every year I talk to hundreds of business owners who feel that bankruptcy is their only option. I talk to hundreds of business owners who feel that they will be looking for a place to live after their home is seized. Egos are battered, families are stressed, and it is the never-ending tale that I hear over and over.

I cannot recall one individual out of all these hundreds of people because, to me, they all have become one person; one American who needs our help to keep from being crushed by a system that does not place value in what they do. We are their last hope.

My time with them lasts only about ten minutes. I listen to them, and hopefully, tell them that we can help. I am always thankful when they agree to take that next step in our process. That process will include our consultants and workout specialists who will develop a working relationship with that business owner that could last more than a year. That relationship will result in a “second wind”, a chance for a better future.

How do I feel about my role in this? I knew three years ago that this was the most rewarding work that I could do. I am truly helping good people. I am giving them hope that they thought didn’t exist. I’m introducing them to a second chance.

The renewal begins with me.

Ken Elmer
Director of Marketing
The Rescuer

I’m the first person. I’m the first person from Second Wind that the clients speak with. I find the people with pain.

It’s not easy. I hear stories of bad fortune, treachery, abandonment, and random acts of cruelty. These are the people we save.

Most business owners I speak with these days are doing fine. They made it through the worst of the Great Recession and are moving forward. They weren’t taken out with the recession tide and lost at sea. They survived.

Not everyone did. I call a lot of phone numbers that are no longer in operation. Dead businesses. Long gone. Lost at sea, drowning or drowned.

And then there are the people who made it through the worst but are still struggling. Their business, their baby, is not doing well, and when I get them on the phone, I can hear the pain in their voices. It always comes through loud and clear on my headset.

That pain has equal parts anxiety, frustration, exhaustion, fear and shame. No one wants to admit they are failing. Or let go of their dream. No one wants to.

So when I reach someone and can offer him or her a way out, a way to keep from being washed out to sea, it feels pretty damn good. I know our workout guys, I know how good they are, and it is very easy and comfortable to schedule them to sit down and hear our solutions.

I get to throw them a lifeline. What could be better than that? I know our workout men will save them.
The Guide

Being on the front lines as the first point of contact in representing Second Wind is the most challenging position I have ever committed myself to. Having been a commodities broker in a former life, that’s saying a lot.

There’s a tremendous amount of noise out there competing for the attention of business owners. Everyone is trying to sell you something. My role in this company is to penetrate that noise and let these people know that if they are experiencing the hardships of this continually weakening economy, we can offer them actual help.

This is when the shields go up. It’s understandable, no blame here. There is no shortage of gimmicks out there that are happy to waste your precious time and money. The reward for me is the men and women that go beyond the looking glass and actively participate in the process of finding out what we have to offer. These are the people that refuse to let me off the phone until they have a clear sense of what we do and what it could mean for them and their family. They are leaving no stone unturned and whether it’s through a debt workout or some other means; they’re probably going to survive while others continue down the slippery slope.

When talking to someone after his or her consultation with Don Todrin, I notice they have a completely different energy; a renewed optimism and clarity of focus. They are slowly allowing themselves to consider the possibility that perhaps what we are telling them could be true. What would it look and feel like if the debts were no longer choking the life out of the business? How would it feel to actually get paid the salary they deserve for all of this hard work? What if they could work on their business instead of being trapped inside their business? Once the light turns on and they see what this path really has to offer, there is no stopping them. They remember the real reasons they had for starting the business, and for the first time in years, it has the potential to survive.

If I could say one thing to a potential client it is this: explore new possibilities. Allow yourself to think outside the box. Don Todrin did exactly that and has refined an effective process that has stood the test of time for the last 30 years. Everyone working here is behind him 1000%. That only happens when you are working with someone who is living his or her true purpose. The stakes are too high to approach this with anything but full commitment, and he continues to set the bar ever higher.
A quote that has always stayed with me throughout my life is that your truest purpose in this life is where your deepest desire and the world's hunger meet. Don exemplifies this. This is not just a job we do to pay the bills. Through Don's leadership, it's a mission. A mission to save businesses and the lives they support. For those of you that might see this as some kind of sales pitch, I understand and wish you the very best. I have no doubt you are working very hard for it. To those who feel a resonance in these words that rings true and are ready for a new adventure, join us.
The Closer

My journey at Second Wind Consultants began shortly after the start of the Great Recession and stock market collapse in 2008. Prior to that, my “day job” was rooted in the information technology arena, covering both hardware and software application sales.

After 20 plus years, and being very good at my job, I knew it was time to change or continue chasing the cheese with very little self-satisfaction in what the results yielded.

That’s when it hit me that I needed to rearrange my priorities regarding high income, fancy titles and prestigious employers, and try to find something that I would really love, regardless of the frills or lack thereof. I needed to see positive results from my efforts. One day while perusing the employment ads and job boards, I came across a rather odd job description about a company that specializes in small business debt and what’s called a “workout”. Needless to say, I got the job. It wasn’t quite the lifestyle I was used to, but again, quality of life beat out stress, travel, quotas, and faking the corporate personality.

After the first few months at SWC, I was amazed at the amount of suffering in the small business community. Each person I spoke with was in serious denial when they had to confront the realities of their business plight. But coupled with that denial came optimism; they just didn’t know where to turn. I watched them ask themselves: do I speak to my attorney about a bankruptcy? Do I try and reason with the bank to modify the debt so I can at least have a fighting chance, or, at worst, time to prepare for my demise? Do I tell my wife? What’s my CPA saying about my numbers? Do I even know how to interpret the situation logically? Why is this happening to me? It’s all my fault for doing or not doing something right. If only, coulda, woulda, shoulda, as my father used to say.

What did I think after hearing all this? I learned that most small biz owners are good at only a few things, and lacked necessary and basis business skills; in general, they couldn’t see the forest for the trees. Things were great in the early 2000’s and everyone was winning. When the worm turned in 2008, everyone was caught in the net and clueless on how to escape the death spiral of debt and revenue decay, and ultimately what it meant to make a profit.
Everyone had scaled their business model to match the good times. Many of those I speak with have just been throwing more money at the problem, money that came from personal savings and not the business. Some went through their entire nest egg, or worse, their children’s college fund. Some abuse credit cards to support the business or take high interest loans like Merchant Services advances. I often tell people to stop the insanity! Where’s your plan? How can you possibly continue? But they do. That’s the American way. Perseverance until death.

I routinely have to overcome the terrible advice provided by lawyers, accountants, or, the real game stopper, the spouse. While it’s a hard conversation to have with your wife/husband, many times it only takes one to bring them on board. I am always sympathetic and tactful, but above all, I am honest about where their situation is headed unless a significant change is made.

When asked to speak with their attorneys, the conversation usually goes well if counsel comes from a business background. If not, then what they don’t understand usually means it’s impossible or simply too good to be true. My personal belief is that most lawyers can’t think outside the box enough to be of any assistance to their clients when faced with a seismic shift in the business environment like we have experienced today. Either that or they love to be paid to learn how to do something they’re not trained to do, but it’s on your dime so let’s give it a shot. How reassuring, huh?

The story is the same with accountants. Numbers don’t lie and even bean counters get that AHA moment when we explain the situation and how we attack it. It’s arithmetic that usually wins out in any discussion. Everything ultimately comes down to time, money and people. It’s either too much, too little, or the wrong mix that either solves or complicates a problem.

The most difficult situation in a business is when there are multiple partners or guarantors of the debt. Each has their own concerns and agendas, and the Three Musketeer mentality often breaks down quickly in the face of dwindling profits or imminent demise.

There’s no pulling punches or sugar coating facts in my world. A workout is a battle and not for the faint of heart. My job is to size up the strengths or weaknesses of a prospective workout from both a macro and micro perspective. Inherent in this assessment is the role we often play as advisor, confessor, confidante, sounding board, reality checker, sympathetic ear, or simply fellow American businessman.

Another stumbling block in bringing sanity into the discussion with small business owners is their blind belief that banks want to help. They don’t. Banks are called institutions, but I’d properly classify most as asylums.
Countless times have I spoken to people who decide to go a different route, only to get a call a month, or even a year later, saying they made a huge mistake. They tell me that the bank swept their operating account for being late, or that they received a demand letter while in negotiations with their friendly bank partner. Again, the American businessman holds onto to his belief in scruples and fair play only to be blindsided by their partner, the bank, the landlord, the vendors, the former owner, etc.

My world consists of speaking to Americans daily who are struggling to survive in their small business enterprises. Unfortunately many are saddled with the sins of the past when the good times were rolling, and easy lending, or even predatory lending, was the norm. The so-called partnerships with banks have turned out to be one dimensional. Way too often do I discover that small businessmen believe they only have two options: stick it out until the money runs out or file a bankruptcy to stop the pain permanently.

Sure there are other options like borrowing more money from friends or family, or worse, attempting to redo the existing note by either reducing the rate or stretching out the payment dates. But at the end, they are just kicking the can down the road and delaying the inevitable.

We have mastered another option which rids the business of the debt and has been a staple of much larger companies for years, but remains secret amongst the millions of struggling small businesses. We give away our knowledge everyday, but sell our experience in business turnarounds and debt workouts.

The really hard issues are mostly emotional and derive from a sense of perceived ethics in performing a workout. To this I say, nothing is more ethical than admitting the business is failing and that the borrower should embark on a workout for the benefit of the lender. Yes, a business that cannot support its debt should liquidate for the benefit of the creditors.

I must also overcome our clients’ fear. Fear of the unknown is a constant battle, but no stone goes unturned once a workout begins, and everything becomes known. It is a matter of arithmetic and the reality of the unsustainable situation. The process Second Wind follows is righteous, and in almost all cases, it is the only path to take aside from shutting the business down. Then tell me about the fear of the unknown.

I don’t use hard sells or scare tactics, I simply tell them the truth. The most effective strategy that we use here at Second Wind Consultants is to bring in clients for a face to face meeting on our nickel, no matter where they live. That is the true test of a workout potential. The facts and the results of prior workouts coupled with the talents we have in-house are always the deciding factors. It’s comparable to solving a Rubik’s Cube puzzle. It takes time and everything has to be in the correct order to succeed.
When a client finally decides to sign on, I can feel and hear the relief come through the telephone or over the conference room table. The weight shifts and the changes are striking. There’s a renewed vigor in the way they look at their business, their future, and the future of their employees and family. It’s a good feeling unlike anything I ever felt in the antiseptic corporate world.

Making a difference is all that matters in life, and speaking from experience, Second Wind Consultants does just that. In a word, we care. We deliver results and as Don likes to say, “What choice do you really have”.

[Signature]
Chapter 11

What’s Next?
The Next Stage After Debt Forgiveness
I eventually came to realize that merely removing debt was not the final salvation of the business. It became clear that the problem was deeper: the business model needed to be run differently with changes made at all levels, including alterations to finances, operations, sales and marketing to finally succeed in this downturned economy.

Although certainly necessary, merely removing debt was not enough. Once the debt was removed, the business owner needed new guidelines to operate successfully. I began to experiment implementing my Four Pillar Strategy which outlines the necessary areas in which change must occur – in addition to debt workout and debt forgiveness – for a small business to be successful in today’s business environment. Built from years of front line experience, in the trenches, fighting hand to hand small business combat, figuring out what works and what doesn’t work, I have reduced these strategies in my Four Pillar turnaround strategy, directing the small business owner to success.

Bringing the strategy to the ground was a very revealing process, which helped me refine and improve the program and better understand what small business owners require for them to survive, emerge and succeed in today's economy.

The Four Pillars is more of a strategy than an answer, and must be uniquely applied to each business. With this strategy, success can be assured.

I then wrote my book *Embrace Change*, revealing the process so any business owners could use the system to achieve similar results.

I further converted this material into a live webinar series which I deliver to all our clients that come in for debt forgiveness workouts. This works very well. I call it a guided self-implemented course where I help them install the Four Pillars into their business.

The combination of debt forgiveness and improved business skills results in vastly improved performance of the business. That is the objective.

I welcome all small business owners searching for answers, alternatives and wanting to not only survive, but emerge and succeed, fighting for your vision, your mission, and wanting to protect your employees and the families who depend upon your business's success. I offer you a path to success.
Conclusion
It’s Time For Action
Conclusion

The Code Of A Warrior

Victory is not always about winning, but is really about doing, the spirit of being in action.

Do it, fall, get up, and do it again.

In the end, all we can ever do is live and act honorably, and do our best.

If we win the battles and the wars, fantastic; if we fight the battles and wars and lose, yet act and live honorably and do our best, we win every day. We can stand tall and be proud of who we are.

That is truly what counts.

This is the code of a warrior.

Most small business owners are such warriors; acting honorably, selflessly, and doing their best; sacrificing, falling and getting up again; committed to leading others who trust and follow them.

There is a time when a warrior knows he or she cannot do it alone and must ask for help.

This is that time. We are here to help.

"Upon the plains of indecision lie the blackened bones of countless millions, who at the very brink of victory stopped to rest, and resting there died"

Adlai E. Stevenson
Contact Us

We are here for you; to talk, design and implement a strategy for you.

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News Letter:

Second Wind Consultants emails a unique and valuable newsletter once per week. Access to this newsletter is free through our website.