

Memorandum

To: Clients, Friends, Family & Associates of Pro@ctive CPA
From: Mark Wyssbrod, Managing Member
Date: March 13, 2013
Re: At Least We Are Not Detroit!

In this memorandum, you will receive information about the following:

- The Most Miserable Places to Live in the US
- How to Find Happiness
- Deadline Reminders
- Financial Ratio of the Month

Please contact me should you have any questions. Turn that frown upside down!

Introduction: At Least We Are Not Detroit!

I am not sure how it is where you live, but here in Atlanta, Georgia we are miserable! Not super miserable as there are 15 cities more miserable than Atlanta. And we are a far cry from the most miserable place to live in the US: Detroit (<http://news.yahoo.com/atlanta-named-16th-most-miserable-city-residents-182200617.html?.tsrc=samsungwn>).

Why are we so miserable? Well, the list is long, but it includes the Georgia Senate not fixing the never-ending traffic problems (in the past 15 years, both political parties have dropped the ball on this one); foreclosures are high; unemployment remains feisty; broken school districts; increase in crime; and the big slap in the face is the Atlanta Braves and Atlanta Falcons cannot seem to win a championship (both teams are reportedly fighting over a name change to the Atlanta Choke)!

Misery is often fueled by several other factors. One of the top causes of misery is financial stress. The information I am privy to lets me know small businesses and individuals are currently full of financial stress. The evening news reports an improved economy over the past few years; however, many small businesses and individuals have not been able to complete a turnaround. I have observed many financial issues in the state of Georgia:

- Mortgages levels being too high compared to household income
- If mortgages are greater than the intangible home value, mental frustration and stress is added to the owner (even if there is no intent to sale)
- Retail-ish businesses have too much debt and collapsing margins
- Increase in businesses selling high-end services but always selecting low bid for themselves
 - Seems like a contradiction

- An over-reliance forming on the automobile industry for economic growth
 - The average car is ~\$28,400
 - The average household can afford to purchase a vehicle for ~\$21,500 (depending on the calculation you use)

You might notice someone who is under financial stress by the way they behave and the word selection they use. They generally try to commoditize others and speak down until they receive a discount. Of course, they would be upset if someone else treated them like the way they treat others. Unfortunately they rationalized why they have done no harm. You will need to be strong as well as confident when you engage these individuals.

Keep your head up and stay positive, and remember—at least we don't live in Detroit!

Mark W.

How Do You Become Happy?

It seems only fair to balance the first part of the update with something a little bit more cheery. Negativity can spread like wild fire; positive thoughts take work. How does one become happy?

- Cultivate gratitude
 - Be appreciative of what you have
 - Do not concentrate on what you don't have and don't need
- Eat healthier
 - You are what you eat!
 - Healthier eating habits and exercise help control stress
- Stop worrying
 - Catch yourself in negative mindsets, and correct yourself to a positive one
 - Create a game plan; the more prepared you are the less you will worry
- Practice forgiveness
 - Sometimes our unhappiness is due to feeling wronged by someone else
 - Learn to forgive others for their actions
- Be involved
 - Participate in meaningful activities and relationships
 - Help a local non-profit and see the difference you can make
 - Transfer the energy of self-centered thoughts into helping others
- Create your life's mission & vision statements
 - Most individuals tend to focus on money
 - Money does not create happiness
 - Understand who you are and what you stand for

I hope you find happiness in your life!

Deadline Reminder: Important Dates to Remember

March 15th

- Corporation (S & C) Tax Returns Are Due (for annual tax filers)
- File Form 7004 For Extension
- Employer Retirement Matches Due
- First quarter Corporate tax estimates are due

April 1st

- Business Personal Property Tax Returns due for Georgia Counties

April 15th

- Individual tax Returns Are Due
 - Or extension and any tax due need to be remitted!
- 1st quarter Individual tax estimates are due

Financial Ratio of The Month - General & Administrative Payroll To Sales

This ratio can inform you how efficiently your labor is operating. Management can use this ratio for rightsizing their labor force.

G&APR to \$ = General & Administrative Payroll / Sales

What should your ratio be? It really depends on your industry!

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