

Inspirational Emails

Wisdom in Advisors

*"There is wisdom in many advisors"
(Proverbs 15:22)*

This ancient Hebrew wisdom proverb also declares that things easily go awry with too few advisors. Have you ever made disastrous financial decision without consulting your accountant or a financial planner? Ever try to start a business without consulting others who were successful with the same type of business? How many of us have made career moves we later regretted because we failed to consult or listen to career counselors, friends or those with relevant career experience? How about personal relationships? Ever wish you followed your spouses' advice before talking with your kids, ex-spouse, or boss? Ever wished you had listened to your parents about that friend they didn't want you hanging around with? Did you ignore a chance to seek outside advice (books, clergy, counselors, or wise friends) before having an unproductive exchange with a friend or family member?

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Of course the above discussion assumes we have the ability to discern a wise counselor from a foolish one (Proverbs 15:7, 14:18). **The cold hard truth is that many who seek to advise us fail the test for a qualified counselor. What criteria should you look for in your advisors other than the obvious (integrity, character, wisdom, and common sense)?** For one thing, **you want a verifiable, successful track record of experience.** It's amazing how many "experts" talk a great game but in reality they have never actually produced what they are advising you on. Many of them have even earned advanced college degrees and are actively soliciting business. Never the less, only about ten percent in any given profession is considered to be truly expert in their field. **The world is full of divorced marriage counselors, clergy alienated from their children, bankrupt business men or business women who have no idea how to manage their business or balance their books** (If you think I'm exaggerating, think of Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom and TYCO to name just a few), **lawyers who have never actually won a case** (at least like your case), **stock brokers and financial planners who have never gotten rich following their own advice, career counselors who are miserable, etc.** And last but not least, your neighbors and co-workers who may be as well meaning, as they are ill informed.

All of which is to say that **it is vital to carefully assess your advisor's actual results with-in the arena your requesting guidance** - relationships, finance, spirituality, health, business, career, child raising and so on. As Ronald Regan used to say about the Soviet's pledge to dismantle their nuclear weapons if only we would do the same; "trust, but verify."

by C.V. Doner