

Central Penn Business Journal's

M&A IN THE MIDSTATE 2016

R. PATRICK WOOD

Senior vice president, Griffin Financial Group LLC, Reading

R. Patrick Wood's road to deal making took a curious twist. Before joining Griffin Financial LLC, Wood was senior asset controller for The Walt Disney Co.-Disneyland in California.

"I wanted to match my excitement for mergers and acquisitions with entertainment," Wood said. "But I was doing more operational plans and missed the deals part of mergers and acquisitions. That's what brought me back to Central PA."

Growing up, Wood sang in choruses at Hershey High School and spent summer evenings singing doo-wop at Hersheypark.

But after college and an internship at Dauphin Deposit Bank, Wood held positions in transactions and auditing with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

Wood said it was his father's work as an attorney in municipal bonds that taught him the thrill of the deal.

"I loved watching his transactions from an early age, seeing the complexities of transactions, how my father prospected new business, watching how he worked in a team and

developed relationships and got the satisfaction of seeing his clients reach their goals," he said.

Wood's jobs at PricewaterhouseCoopers involved auditing to help buyers or lenders make decisions about buying and selling.

Wood said Griffin's specialty is M&A but it also helps companies raise capital.

Wood's advice is also his biggest challenge: convincing business owners they need investment banking guidance when they already have longstanding relationships with attorneys and accountants.

"We're here to augment those relationships," he said.

While Wood suggests bringing in an investment bank at least two years before a sale, the current market might make a client think twice about waiting to strike a deal.

"We're in the hottest M&A market in years - it's been unbelievable," he said. "There's an amazing amount of capital out there chasing too few deals. But will that change tomorrow? A business owner may think it's better to sell now."



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