

DAILY PRESS

FINANCIAL SAVVY

Building a profitable future

Consultant Guy Manchester offers "Smart Women Finish Rich" seminars to help participants understand money.

BY JILL WINKOWSKI/SPECIAL TO THE DAILY PRESS

Financial consultant Guy Manchester means it when he says, "It's not about the money." As area women who have attended his Smart Women Finish Rich seminars know, it's about power.

A former army helicopter pilot now working with Financial Security Management Inc. in Newport News, Manchester is passionate about educating women in personal finance. After reading David Bach's book "Smart Women Finish Rich," he realized that the Bach seminar was a fitting vehicle for teaching the financial practices he advocated on a daily basis.

Manchester jokingly admitted to a glib first reaction to the book. "I was angry that I hadn't been motivated enough to write the book. ... Instead of David Bach doing my seminars, I'm doing his."

With the seminar comes homework. One of those assignments is called the seven-day challenge. Manchester gives each participant a notepad and a challenge to keep track of all their expenses for seven days.

"If there's nothing else the ladies get from this seminar, it is a passion to do something," said Manchester. "I have been overwhelmed by the seven-day challenge results. The ladies have called me up to analyze their spending habits, and they begin to look at their values a little differently. For me, that's the reward I get."

Manchester restricts his audience to women, and his reasons for this are both professional and personal. A framed photograph of a girl in her 20s rests prominently in front of his materials whenever he gives a seminar. "My daughter, Stacy, is probably one of the main reasons I am doing this." Stacy is a speech pathologist with Hampton City Public Schools.

"I don't want my daughter to have go through what I did."



Manchester's popular personal finance seminars are based on the book by David Bach, "Smart Women Finish Rich." PHOTOS BY KENNETH SILVER/DAILY PRESS

Guy Manchester

Family: Wife, Marie; daughter, Stacy

Age: 55

Residence: Newport News

Occupation: Financial Consultant with Financial Security Management Inc.

'Smart Women Finish Rich' seminars

■ **Feb. 15,** 6:30-8:30 p.m. at The Arbors in Port Warwick, Newport News, RSVP 595-7767

■ **Feb. 24,** 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 5:30-7:30 p.m., RSVP 262-2000

For more information, visit www.vpcc.org under "Business Center."



Guy Manchester responds to a seminar participant.

Manchester became the caretaker and financial manager for his mother after she suffered a stroke. Even as experienced as he was, he felt he was not wholly prepared for the challenge. "Children in the 25- to 35-year-old range... never dream that they might have to manage mom and dad's financial situation, real estate status, movements in and out of medical facilities and life and death decisions. Who has ever taught anybody to make those kinds of decisions?"

The value of being prepared on

both sides of these life events hit home with Michele Nolley, a working mother who has attended the Smart Women seminar. When she went home from the seminar, the first thing she did was go through all her personal files and index them on one sheet of paper with contact numbers and descriptions so that her family would know where to find the documents when they needed them. She was then motivated to attend Manchester's follow-up seminar on wills and trusts.

Manchester is a natural educator. In the army as a pilot, he quickly progressed to flight instructor. This progression occurred just as fast for him in his new field. But his passion for educating in personal finance did not begin with his license to give the David Bach seminars. More than six years ago, Manchester approached the Lifelong Learning Society at Christopher Newport University with an idea for a class.

"Organizing your Family Filing System' has been a popular course ever since," said Jane Sulzberger, director of the Lifelong Learning Center. "It's always full, and some people even take it again."

Another educational venture he has organized has been rounding up a number of his colleagues from the Peninsula Business Network and holding mock interviews for business students at Hampton City Schools. Some of the students have called his office later on to tell him about how an interview went.

Manchester doesn't charge a fee for the Finish Rich seminars, viewing it as a way to give back to the community. The Virginia Chamber of Commerce has been a staunch supporter of the workshops, hosting them several times. Other venues have been his own office building and many businesses, which have offered the seminars to employees.

"It's not about the money. If I do my job as a financial consultant, I'll get your business, but being a financial consultant is more than about your money. It's about your family. It's about your friends, your goals, your values."

From his own experience and as a financial professional, Manchester knows that any family could have that phone call at any minute. "The truth is, none of us will be prepared for it if we don't take steps." ■



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