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2 ½ Minutes with Donald Hoffman



Donald Hoffman, a partner at Hertzbach & Company, P.A., is also president of The Prosperity Consulting Group, LLC.

Donald Hoffman is working hard to defy the stereotypes about accountants. Hoffman is a partner at Owings Mills-based Hertzbach & Co. and president of its wealth management company, Prosperity Consulting. But you won't catch him sporting a pocket protector.

When he's not working, you might find him cooking, riding his bike, playing racquetball, traveling or even scuba diving.

Of course, finding time to indulge in those pursuits can be a challenge: His Hertzbach work weeks can total 80 hours, and in his scant spare time, he pursues independent business ventures.

In the 1990s, he worked with Harry Ilardo of Towson-based Mama Ilardo's to land a location for the restaurant in a Las Vegas casino. So when Hoffman's clients want to talk about something besides the finer points of the tax code, he's happy to oblige – and has plenty of tales of his own.

What was your first job?

I was a porter and janitor at a Pikesville bowling alley, cleaning up the lanes. I basically always had three or four jobs at the same time. Anything my brother and I could do to make money, we did.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

What I love to do is scuba diving. To me, scuba diving is total peace on earth.

What's something that would surprise your clients about you?

I'm a fabulous cook. I love experimenting with cooking.

Why did you get into working with Mamma Ilardo's?

It was a challenge. Everybody in the food business wanted to be in the MGM Grand (in Las Vegas). Harry Ilardo and I went out there. They were a small company from Baltimore, and we were able to convince them they ought to put Mamma Ilardo's in the casino. It was an unbelievable high.

What has been most influential on you in business?

In life and business, once you take the first step, which most people won't do – once you actually take the risk and experience what it's like – then you can repeat those actions and grow.

What is your biggest guilty pleasure?

What I love more than all this gourmet food I cook is cottage fries (similar to home fries). Sometimes, when I get the urge, I will drive to McGarvey's in Annapolis and order a beer and two orders of cottage fries with a lot of ketchup and some yellow mustard.