

Steven Bankler, CPA
Client Spotlight: MPN, Inc.

Thirty years ago you would have found John F. Dini and his wife Leila Dini running a successful auto parts distribution business in California. Life was good but there was one problem: work-life balance.

“We were so entrenched in the business together—we heard the same jokes, saw the same people, had the same conversations. We had nothing left to talk about at the end of the day,” he confessed.

The couple sold that business when John had the opportunity to work as a healthcare consultant, and moved the family (including two sons, now ages 22 and 24) to San Antonio. The family thrived in the Alamo city. And MPN, Inc., the business that today has blossomed into a comprehensive consulting practice for owner-managed businesses, took root. But John found himself spending too much time traveling and not enough time with his family. In 1997, he purchased a franchise of The Alternative Board® (TAB)—a membership organization of business owners and CEOs providing peer advisory boards and business coaching—to keep him (literally) grounded. By 1998, the San Antonio group was the largest TAB franchise in the system and MPN, Inc. had expanded into other industries, allowing John to serve more diverse clients locally.

“I’m a geek; small business is my work and my passion,” quips John. “Consulting through both MPN, Inc. and TAB keeps me entrenched with these business owners, who I think are the coolest people on the planet.”

A seasoned financial and business professional in her own right, Leila graciously agreed to join forces with John once more in 2001 to help MPN, Inc. thrive. The agreement, however, came with some ground rules: They treat each other as colleagues at work and as spouses at home.



In 2002, MPN, Inc. evolved to include the exit strategy practice John is well known for today. Professionals and organizations from across the nation bring John in to consult one-on-one or speak to groups getting ready to exit the world of business ownership.

“Baby boomers had to fight to be where they are in business today—as the owners of two-thirds of the small businesses in the U.S. Now they’re selling their companies in a great surge, just as they entered the business world,” John points out. “Part of my speaking, consulting, and writing practice is focused on helping these small business owners move on.”

Wearing these various hats puts John into contact with a diverse number of business owners, including Steven Bankler. Years ago, Steven joined TAB in San Antonio, where he made an impression on John from the start.

“I would hear Steven (in TAB meetings) give the most brilliant insights. It wasn’t long before I had referred him at least 20 business owners,” smiles John. “One day, Leila and I found ourselves seriously questioning our own tax strategy and a light bulb went off. We laughed, ‘Why aren’t WE using Steve?’” The rest, John says, is history.

“The Bankler motto is true; we really have saved money,” he says. “Steven helped us restructure and find smarter ways to do business. Other accountants will tell you, ‘I don’t see anything in the tax code that says we can do it.’ And that will be the end of it. Steve has the experience and confidence to know better. He’ll tell you, ‘I don’t see anything in the tax code that says we can’t do it.’ And then he’ll set off to investigate.”

For learn more about MPN, Inc., visit www.mpninc.com and for more information about TAB San Antonio, visit www.tabsanantonio.com. John Dini’s acclaimed book for entrepreneurs, “Hunting in a Farmer’s World,” is a great resource. More at www.huntinginafarmersworld.com.

