

PHILADELPHIA BUSINESS JOURNAL



**GOING THE
DISTANCE**

John
Milligan
in CEO File
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‘Think, then plan, then act.’

JOHN MILLIGAN | MILLIGAN & CO.

CEO FILE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: John Milligan
Title: Managing partner
Company: Milligan & Co., Philadelphia
Type of company: Consulting and certified public accountants
Number of employees: 48
Revenue in last fiscal year: Undisclosed.
Recent project: Kicked off the four-day 2010 Airport Business Diversity Conference. Five senior Milligan staffers, all nationally recognized subject matter experts in federal contracting, conducted training on certification programs, business structures, financial analysis and compliance for airport executives and administrators.
Education: Temple University, BBA in accounting (1975)
First job: Staff accountant at Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers).
Little-known fact about you: Have run the 10-mile Broad Street Run 27 years in a row.
Home: Norristown.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Essential business philosophy: Think, then plan, then act. Hire character above skill; skill can always be taught.
Best way to keep a competitive edge: Stay physically fit.
Yardstick of success: Loyal clients and loyal employees. You can't have one without the other.
Goal yet to be achieved: Secure the legacy of Milligan & Co.

JUDGMENT CALLS

Best decision: Starting my own firm.
Worst decision: I don't know that I've had a "worst decision," but there have been lessons I've learned from some bad ones.
Toughest decision: Leaving Coopers & Lybrand.
Mentor: Bruce Cohen (former Coopers & Lybrand partner).

TRUE CONFESSIONS

Word that best describes you: Persistent — my wife defines that as "stubborn."
Like best about your job: Our incredible staff diversity — race, gender, age groups. We learn so much from each other.

Like least about your job: Time sheets.
The most important lesson you've learned: Refuse to quit — learn from your failures, and when you do get it right, someone is bound to tell you how lucky you are!
Life motto: Do the right thing, regardless of the challenges.
Greatest fear: Our nation is not preparing our youth for their future — or my generation's retirement.
Person most interested in meeting: President Obama — what I admire most is that he didn't take the safe route by waiting another term or two for things to get better and was willing to take on tough issues when prospects were far from certain.
Company you respect most: Apple Computer for its constant ability to adapt and thrive.
First choice for a new career: Fishing guide on the Conasauga River, which runs through Tennessee and Georgia.
Greatest extravagance: Vacations with the entire family.

ET CETERA

Award/honor most proud of: Norristown High School Hall of Fame, because it cuts across all sectors: business, government, education, arts and sciences and is a nomination by your peers. I'm in some very good company.
Most influential book: "Good to Great" by Jim Collins.
Favorite movie: "The Jerk" (laughter is good medicine).
Favorite restaurant: Mission Grill and virtually anything Mexican.
Favorite vacation spot: Anywhere with my family.
Favorite room in the house: Basement — it's where I indulge in my hobbies.
Favorite way to spend free time: With the grandkids.
Car you drive: A totally depreciated Mercedes E320. ■



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