



Richard Johnson

Managing Director, Worldwide Head of Global High Yield
ING Barings

At the time of this interview, Richard had worked for several Wall Street firms, Salomon Brothers, Drexel Burnham, Nomura and Chase Securities where he served as Vice President of their Fixed Income Sales Group. He joined ING Barings in 1994 and currently serves as Worldwide Head of their Global High Yield organization. Richard received his B.S. from Indiana University and spent a semester at the London School of Economics. He

and his wife Lizabeth have a daughter, Isabelle. Collectively, the Johnson's enjoy traveling, exercise and prayer.

professional

What character qualities do you look for when hiring?

I think that number one is faith in God. If you look at history and if you look at the way the world's evolved, faith in God is the most important quality. Hopefully honesty. And that's something that's difficult to gauge in a particular interview meeting, but living a life where you have this feeling that there's always a camera on you when the doors are closed and there's nobody around. How do you conduct yourself? Those are very important characteristics. And then I think the concept of diligence. Diligence is very, very important. Not only do you want to be associated with people who are going to be hard working and industrious, but people that are going to have joy when they come to work and work all day long with a smile on their face or passion toward their work and their work ethic and then they do it with that real exuberance and that diligence is involved.

personal

How do you define success? How has your definition evolved?

I define success as consistency of purpose. When I learned to fight ... when I used to fight, you put something in front of you and that would be the object. But the goal was not to hit this, the goal was to hit this, back here. This just happened to be in the way. And that's kind of the way I go after business. It's a passion. It's something you're determined you're going to fulfill. And with all they are getting, get understanding ... just go for it and just be diligent and don't give up. Because there's going to be a lot of things that knock you down, there's a lot of stumbles along the way. I think I heard once that the difference between a professional and an amateur is that they both get knocked down, but the professional gets up.

spiritual

How has God changed your life? How has your choice of faith in God changed your life?

I had an experience actually as a youth. One day I reading the Gospel and I was laying in my bed, at a very early age, and I had a real picture, a vision of what Jesus went through for me. And it just touched my life to the point where I thought I was just going to dedicate my life in that religious order, forever. And then unfortunately in school I discovered women in a much more aggressive manner than I probably needed to. And then I decided I'll call it quits for that for a little bit and then I met my wife. Because my wife was just this wonderful girl who just loved Jesus with all of her heart and all of a sudden the light bulb went back on and it's been to the extent that as an adult making that decision and recognizing that you do have a choice. You can choose to be with God, you can choose not to be with God. I chose to be with God. Because God represents and epitomizes everything that is good,



that is healthy, that is successful and that is wonderful. I said, "That's the choice I'm going to make." And my life got a lot better.

Can you follow Christ and still have a successful career, family and such?

First of all, I pray with all my clients before meals. And some of my clients thought it was kind of weird. But today they love it. They know that I'm not going to rip them off on a transaction. They know I'm a guy that's got character and morality and integrity and so they know if I say to buy something or sell something, I'm probably not trying to pull the wool over their eyes. So that's something that works very well for you, truthfully. And being bold about it is an important thing. We had a big offsite meeting not that long ago ... actually it was a couple of years ago ... when I was just kind of on the way, either sideways up or down. We didn't know at that time. It turned out that it went up ... thanks be to God ... and we were with all these different people around the world. And we had this meeting for two days and we were determining the direction of a company. And at the final dinner, I asked the people who were chairing the event if it would be okay if we prayed. And they looked at me and thought, "Hm." And I said, "Well, would anybody ...", out loud, ... "Would anybody be offended if I prayed before our meal?" In that kind of environment they all said, "No, go ahead. Of course, of course." So I did. Well, afterward, individually, everybody came up to me and said, "Bob, that touched my life. Thank you. That was really neat. Wow." Not as a group, but individually. And the point was that excellence was determined, I think, just by being bold enough to not force anybody into, "Hey, this is what I believe" or "Hey, this is what I think", but living by example and letting people know just a little bit that I happen to know about God and I love God and it's okay for you to, too. And that's all.