

Feb. 3, 2011 - Unless you've been cut off from every source of media, not to mention all human contact, you're aware that the Super Bowl is fast approaching. If you're a football fan, you're probably eager to watch the game featuring this year's best teams. And if you're a business owner, you can learn a lot from how Super Bowl teams are put together.

One thing that virtually all Super Bowl teams share is a stellar quarterback — someone who drives his team with skill, agility and vision. These same qualities can be found in a qualified, experienced financial professional — someone who can act as your “quarterback” and help you reach your goals.

What sorts of guidance might you get from your “quarterback”? Here are some possibilities:

Coordinating your “team” — A Super Bowl-caliber quarterback obviously is adept at getting everyone on the offense to play well together. And as a business owner, you, too, may need to get your own “team” up and running. Specifically, you may well need to use both an attorney and a tax professional to help you take care of various aspects of your business. Your financial advisor can help coordinate their services.. For example, if your business is involved with your estate plans, you will have legal, tax and investment considerations to deal with — so you'll want all your legal, tax and financial advisors working together toward your ultimate objectives.

Executing your strategy — Whether a quarterback hands off the football or throws a pass, he is attempting to follow his team's game plan, or strategy. And your financial advisor, as your quarterback, will help you execute the right game strategy to attain your own objectives. For starters, your financial advisor will ask questions such as these: Do you have a retirement plan in place? If so, is it appropriate for your needs? Do you have the right types and amounts of business insurance? Have you considered business succession strategies? Once your financial advisor knows the answer to these questions, he or she can then help you implement your overall strategy through the use of suitable products and services.

Adjusting your “plays” — When a quarterback sees something he doesn't like, such as a last-minute change in the opposing team's defense, he may call an “audible” to adjust his team's designed play. Similarly, your financial advisor, upon identifying obstacles to your success, may recommend changes to your “plays” — the individual actions that make up your overall financial strategy. To illustrate: After reviewing the progress you're making toward the

Financial Focus: Business owners need their own “quarterback”

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retirement lifestyle you seek , your financial advisor determines that your retirement plan — e.g., your owner-only 401(k), SEP-IRA, SIMPLE IRA or whatever plan you’ve chosen — is underfunded, contains a high percentage of conservative investments, and may need potential growth opportunities. Consequently, your financial advisor may help you decide it’s time for an “audible” – in other words, it’s time to re-evaluate so you may consider adjusting your contribution level and investment mix.

A Super Bowl team needs a good quarterback — and so does your business.

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