



# MY BIG BREAK: Listening to his heart, and his dad, leads accountant to start own firm

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They say when one door closes, another opens. That has certainly been the case recently.

After serving as a partner for 30 years at a major CPA firm, I closed that door and created another (my newest big break, if you will) by forming a new company: Sponsel CPA Group.

Everyone asks me why I'm investing everything in this new venture rather than planning for retirement. It's a good question and one that required a lot of soul-searching.

Even at my age, I still seek my father's advice on important matters. He's always been my mentor and role model. As I contemplated this tough

decision, he told me to listen to my heart and be true to myself. It was simple, wise counsel that made a lot of sense.

I realized I wasn't happy, fulfilled or motivated where I was. My heart and my head both told me I had an opportunity to make a positive impact on many people's lives. My father recently died, but not before he saw me put his advice into motion by launching Sponsel CPA Group.

My big break in forming this new company has given me the freedom to create an organization that represents everything I believe in, all of the values my father instilled in me -- honesty, loyalty, trust, hard work and ethics.

I also have the opportunity to infuse some critical yet non-traditional business principles into the company, like passion, enthusiasm and the expectation that we have fun every day. I believe life is too short not to enjoy yourself -- even at work!

Launching Sponsel CPA Group has been a true test of my abilities, fortitude and relationships.

I'm humbled by the incredible support I've received from family, friends, colleagues and clients. In about four weeks, I leased 10,000 square feet of prime Downtown real estate, designed a corporate headquarters, launched an aggressive marketing campaign, hired nearly 20 business and accounting professionals and became fully operational. I could not have accomplished these monumental feats without the hard work and contributions of those around me.

Breaking off a long-standing partnership was not an easy decision. I'm happy I listened to my father's advice. I have no regrets.

I have more optimism, excitement and energy than I've had in years. One door closed, another one opened. I'm happy, I'm blessed and I'm thankful to have such a loyal support system of friends and family.

-- By Thomas J. Sponsel

**Thomas J. Sponsel**

- **Age:** 56.
- **Job title:** Managing partner at Sponsel CPA Group.
- **Duties:** Auditing and assurance; business valuation, appraisal and litigation; merger and acquisition planning and facilitation; and succession planning.
- **About the company:** Sponsel CPA Group is a full-service accounting firm offering auditing and assurance; tax services; strategic financial and business consulting; financial planning and wealth management; litigation, business valuation and appraisal services; merger and acquisition consulting and facilitation; succession planning; and bookkeeping. For more information, call (317) 608-6699 or visit [www.SponselCPAGroup.com](http://www.SponselCPAGroup.com).
- **Experience:** Sponsel previously was a partner and co-founder of Greenwalt Sponsel.
- **Education:** Bachelor's degree from Indiana University.
- **Personal:** Sponsel and his wife, Barbara, have two children and three granddaughters.