



Is the road you're on taking you where you want to go?

Maybe it's time to change direction.

Sometimes you get set on a certain path and you put your head down, keep charging forward and hope at the end of the road you'll have built a great career for yourself. And then at some point you stop, look up, and say, "Is this really where I want to be? It's not quite the destination I'd hoped for."

If you find yourself in that situation, maybe it's time to think about a change of scenery. **Grier Laughlin** is a former wirehouse advisor who made the leap to independence in 2005 by joining Securities America. He wishes he'd done it sooner.

SAI: Can you describe your overall transition experience from a wirehouse to the independent environment?

Grier: As with any transition, some things went better than expected and some did not. But after the transition, this is definitely a better place to be. Now I'm able to set my own culture, answer to no one, and I *own my own business*. So in addition to the month-to-month rewards, I'm building a long-term asset.

I was concerned about losing the prestige of being with a well-known wirehouse, and I did lose a few clients for whom the brand name was more important than the relationship. Since becoming independent, though, I've won business I wasn't able to get before with clients who prefer not to work with a wirehouse. In the end, I retained about 80 percent of the clients I wanted to retain.



SAI: How did you build your business model?

Grier: I created an S corporation; I share overhead and some administrative staff with one other representative, soon to be two.

SAI: You've said that your office has the feel of a wirehouse, yet is completely independent. How so?

Grier: I'm still able to offer the same high level of service and basically the same products – probably even more products. From a compliance and marketing standpoint, I can be much more creative. For example, at the wirehouse, I couldn't create my *own* client letters – I had to choose from a pre-written database of choices, and I couldn't change them, even if they had grammatical errors!

SAI: What were the toughest challenges during your transition?

Grier: The toughest challenges were 1) clients that I thought I would bring with me who were more attached to the brand name, and 2) there are more "moving parts" on the independent side; I had to learn how to manage a back office and get all of those parts working for me.

SAI: What pleasant surprises have you encountered since you've been independent with Securities America?

Grier: Payout. Also, I've won business I wasn't able to before from people who prefer to not work with wirehouses. Securities America is gearing its future business to my type of advisor – a younger advisor working with younger clients in a fee-based arrangement – and they have a lot of tools and programs to support these growth objectives. I'd say there are basically three main points for advisors considering going independent:

- 1) The pay is better – incredibly better.
- 2) You own your own business.
- 3) You don't lose any prestige because you have the ability to create your own culture. You can be as prestigious as you want.

Choose a *new* path of independence and Create Your Own Prestige!

Call Securities America today to find out how we can help you make the transition to independence!

Generous **Business Transition Packages** are available for those who qualify! **Call toll free: 800.989.8441**