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50**

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BEST ADVISERS**

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ISSN 1832-9195



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Masterclass

After 2008, with the market now awash with bargains, do you want some fresh financial advice? Penny Pryor presents the Masterclass, our 50 most skilled advisers.

You may be an experienced investor yourself but surely the current volatility is starting to scare you just a little. It's all right to tell yourself you're in for the long haul, but if your portfolio is falling daily, and if you've borrowed over your share investments and even received a margin call, you may be looking for a hand to hold onto tightly.

This is where a good adviser can help. Not only do they know about invaluable strategies, as detailed over the next few pages, but they can also provide a bit of comfort. When everyone is running scared, experienced financial planners can keep clients on the straight and narrow by reminding them they are investors, rather than speculators, and that this too will pass.

For the past 12 years, *AFR Smart Investor*, and its predecessor *Personal Investor* magazine, have conducted the annual Masterclass exam for financial planners. This exam quizzes entrants on their knowledge of the relevant rules and regulations and how best to apply them to individual scenarios. It is based on the idea that the most value a financial planner can provide to individuals is through education and strategic advice.

Education and support

Stephen Priestley of Godfrey Pembroke, in Newcastle, is the highest scorer this year. He says education is the key to remaining calm in the current environment.

"Patient investors know that Australian and global sharemarkets have always recovered from once-in-a-generation events, such as the Great Depression, the 1973 oil crisis, the 1987 sharemarket crash, and now the 2008 financial crisis," he says.

Graeme Quinlan of WHK Horwath Wealth Management in Victoria is our fourth highest scorer. He sympathises with all clients in these conditions – especially retirees – and wonders if he should have seen it coming. "The truth is that sub-prime and the global financial crisis have come as a shock across the board. Relative calm can be derived from the fact that you are not alone, we are all exposed to it," he says.

Zurich Financial Services Manager of Technical Services, Jennifer Brookhouse, in conjunction with Strategy Steps director Louise Biti, co-ordinated the Masterclass exam for us this year and says investors shouldn't be afraid of asking for help when they need it.

Having a financial planner who is readily available to you is key, and advisers who maintain high levels of client contact, report that their customers are less worried than most others. "Being very approachable is obviously important in this kind of climate," Brookhouse says.

Charles Azzopardi, one of our top 10 planners, says his firm, Whittle & Skok Financial Services, has been expanding its

Graeme Quinlan

The satisfaction is derived from the relationship you develop with clients over a period of time.

client contact ever since late last year. "We've been increasing the level of communication and being very tight with service standards," he says. That means responding to client requests promptly, issuing regular emails and completing at least two annual consultations.

Technically comfortable

A good financial planner is one who can add value via appropriate strategies and knows when and how to adjust them for different circumstances, something that is particularly important now.

For example, Brookhouse cites the transition to retirement pension – where investors can start taking a percentage of

their super balance as a pension prior to full retirement – as one successful way of rebuilding client balances. "Investors need to speak to their adviser and go over their goals," she says. The transition to retirement pension is also Azzopardi's favourite option. "It's too good a strategy for clients that are eligible ... to ignore it."

Priestley says there are always risk-free returns investors can take advantage of. A simple example is salary sacrificing. "Deductible contributions can provide an immediate and guaranteed return of up to 59 per cent, while the government co-contribution gives 150 per cent on the original investment," he says. He highlights the value

of receiving good strategic advice at the right time, through the following example: A couple borrowed \$500,000 to purchase an investment property on advice from a friend just four years before they were planning to retire. The cost of holding the house is about \$100,000 but its value has not increased since purchase.

"They did not understand the nature of the investment, the risks involved or what rate of capital growth was required to just break even," he says. "The investment strategy was too risky for them and did not suit their objective of creating wealth for retirement in just four years."

Here are the nation's top planners – and their top strategies.



Stuart Fulton

I see myself as a teacher, giving clients the required information.

Ian Bruce

I enjoy finding useful, beneficial solutions that optimise my clients' wellbeing.

Jason Perkins

I like keeping abreast of changes in the laws, markets and the economy.

Jeff Lemin

The part I enjoy most is working with clients to help them reach their goals.

Grant Enders

I get satisfaction from all our clients who see the benefit offered by our services.

The top 50 moneymakers

Name	Company	Address	City	Telephone
ACT				
Ian Bruce	Australian Financial Services	PO Box 1101	Dickson	02 6247 3399
Scott Farmer	Bravium	4/32 Theziger Court	Deakin	02 6232 4822
NEW SOUTH WALES				
Steven Allen	Godfrey Pembroke (Allen Private Wealth Advice)	Suite 3, 91 Frederick Street	Merewether	02 4963 6690
Patrick Anwandter	Strategy First Financial Planning	1/696 Pittwater Road	Brookvale	02 9939 4686
Michael Badger	Badger Financial Services	1610/352 Sussex Street	Sydney	1300 668 965
Alex Berlee	AGS Financial Group	Level 2, 12-14 Falcon Street	Crows Nest	02 9966 8188
Dominic Cogger	Woodbury Financial Services	Level 1, 3 Carlingford Road	Epping	02 9869 1933
Damian Crowe	DC Financial Advisory Services	Suite 31, 41 Rawson Street	Epping	02 9869 3233
Darryn Fellowes	Skeggs Goldstien Associates	35/6 Meridian Place	Bella Vista	1300 753 447
Michael Fitzpatrick	Dominion Wealth Advice (TFSA)	172 Keira Street	Wollongong	0405 036 741
Paul Harwood	Bridges Financial Services	Level 5, 111 Crown Street	Wollongong	02 4226 1233
Aaron Hodges	RetireInvest	22 Broughton Street	Camden	02 4655 9441
Simon Hodges	RetireInvest	PO Box 465	Parramatta	02 9633 9055
David Lenarduzzi	Executive Wealth Solutions	56 Berry Street	North Sydney	02 9455 0304
Tim Mackay	Quantum Financial Services Australia	Level 5, 1-5 Railway Street	Chatswood	02 9440 8084
Jason Perkins	Bridges	Level 4, 4-8 Woodville Street	Hurstville	02 9570 3222
Stephen Priestley	Godfrey Pembroke	PO Box 104	Newcastle	02 4926 1033
David Pritchard	AGS Financial Group	Level 2, 12-14 Falcon Street	Crows Nest	02 9966 8188
Paul Schnelle	Potts & Schnelle	25 Queen Street	Corowa	02 6033 2233
Errol Umar	FuturePlus Financial Services	Ground floor, 28 Margaret Street	Sydney	02 8234 6000
Craig Willford	Nexia Court Financial Solutions	Level 29, 264 George Street	Sydney	02 8264 0759
QUEENSLAND				
Peter Connolly	Centric Wealth	Level 16, 123 Eagle Street	Brisbane	07 3230 6555
Grant Enders	Tyman Mackenzie	Level 13, 240 Queen Street	Brisbane	07 3223 9300
Derek Fitzgerald	Magnitude Financial Planning	105-107 Victoria Street	Mackay	07 4957 1600
Anthony Isaac	Donegal Financial Planning	GPO Box 2807	Brisbane	07 3212 6111
Jeff Lemin	Aspire Financial Consulting Pty Ltd	PO Box 361	Toowoomba	07 46382081
Paul Little	Landmark Financial Management	U 30 Ground floor Ballou Chambers	Spring Hill	07 3832 0866
Karen McLeod	Genesys Wealth Advisers	GPO Box 2776	Brisbane	07 3221 7722
Suellen Ohl	Kennas Financial Services	PO Box 201	Rockhampton	07 4924 9100
Kellie Payne	RetireInvest	PO Box 1042	Caloundra	07 5491 6722
Peter Rowsell	Rowsell Financial	Level 5, Toowong Tower	Toowong	07 3310 8770
SOUTH AUSTRALIA				
Brandon Yip	Edwards Marshall Financial Solutions	GPO Box 2163	Adelaide	08 8139 1194
TASMANIA				
Matthew McConnell	Shadforths	PO Box 349	Devonport	03 6498 7777
VICTORIA				
Doug Allan	Mercer	Level 13, 33 Exhibition Street	Melbourne	03 9623 5957
Charles Azzopardi	Whittle & Skok Financial Services	260 High Street	Kew	03 9853 7999
Linda Briers	Citi Smith Barney	15/120 Collins Street	Melbourne	03 8643 9270
Raegan Durch	Mercer	33 Exhibition Street	Melbourne	03 9623 5013
Andrew Garrigan	Lifestyle Retirement Planning	10 Aberdeen Street	Geelong	03 5229 1555
Anne Graham	McPhail HLG Financial Planning	38 Ellingworth Parade	Box Hill	03 9898 9221
Darren Layton	Strategem Financial Group	35 Mundy Street	Bendigo	03 5445 4777
Mark Lowe	Financial Services Partners	GPO Box 4354	Melbourne	03 9602 8888
Angelos Lysikatos	Westpac Banking Corporation (WBC)	Ground floor, 365 Ferntree Gully Road	Mt Waverley	04 2199 2792
Stuart McKenzie	Strategem Investment Services	35 Mundy Street	Bendigo	03 5445 4777
Marcus O'Connor	The Next Step	47 High Street	Beechworth	03 5728 2222
Graeme Quinlan	WHK Horwath Wealth Management	Level 1, 675 Victoria Street	Abbotsford	03 9420 7400
Campbell Sorell	Haintz Financial Services	Level 10, 379 Collins Street	Melbourne	03 9620 0400
WESTERN AUSTRALIA				
Kim Bailey (Kimberley)	Godfrey Pembroke	8/251 Adelaide Terrace	Perth	08 9219 7930
Stuart Fulton	Self Funded Retirement Planners	Office 2, L4 10 Eastbrook Terrace	Perth	08 9220 5200
Claudio Lopresti	Citi Smith Barney	Level 11 Exchange Plaza	Perth	08 9288 9214
Robert Pyne	HPH Solutions	1/35 Outram St	West Perth	08 9213 0444

Planners listed alphabetically.