



The 2 Questions Every Canadian Investor Must Answer

Description

Dear Fellow Fools,

As you might have noticed, there's a lot of excitement brewing here at our Fool.ca website. You've probably seen some ads we placed around these parts, hinting that something big is on the way.

(And take a look at the classified section in today's *Globe and Mail* for another one of our "Foolish" pranks.)

So what's the reason for all this fuss? Well, it's simple. Something big IS on the way!

You'll be hearing about it more over the next few days, and I promise you'll know the full details by Tuesday. What I can say for now is that starting next week, we'll be able to talk about stocks together in an entirely new way. One that I think you'll find very rewarding.

Don't worry ... we'll still meet right here on Fool.ca every day. But nevertheless, with all this big excitement afoot, today has been a good chance for me to reflect back on our nine months together.

And I realized that I've made a little mistake.

I've been so busy keeping you up to speed with the latest market developments, and bringing our Foolish investing philosophy to Canada, that I forgot to tell you anything at all about another important topic ... me!

[Gulp.]

So why don't you tell us a little about yourself?

It's a question we've all been asked at one time or another. And, yes, it's always an awkward one to answer. Indeed, where should I even start?

Well, first of all, I'm Canadian.

The fact that I've been staring at the screen for 30 minutes trying to figure out how to talk about myself serves as ironclad proof of my citizenship.

Second of all, I'm an investor. But you already knew about that. A better question for me, and for ALL of us to answer is, *why* do you invest? And *who* do you invest for?

For me, it's my wife and my three young daughters. (For somebody who was never very good at talking to girls, I've really been thrown into the fire!)

After spending the past 13 years or so in Toronto, we recently relocated to an area north of the city that will hopefully provide the girls with the kind of youth that I had, as I grew up in a rural area of Ontario. Though I did not grow up on a farm, I was very much a part of the agricultural community that surrounded us and have participated extensively in many a farming activity in my day. Some of the activities being relatively more glamorous than others. Key word, "relatively".

What I do when I'm not milking cows

My post-secondary education was provided by Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, where I studied Business Administration. It was there that I was first bit by the investing bug and knew that I wanted to make a career of it.

After graduating, I had little in the way of practical experience or connections to the world of finance, so after taking a bit of a break and making a two-month trek around Europe, I launched into cracking the Canadian investment industry. My first job was a client services role at a big mutual fund company, answering the phones from noon-8 p.m., Monday to Friday. Perhaps more glamorous than farming, but not much.

From there, I moved into a role with what is known as a "custodian" in the financial industry. These companies serve an administrative role and my job was to make sure institutional client trades were settling properly. The job was repetitive, the working conditions not ideal, but it served its purpose for the six months or so that I was there.

After a three-year stint in the investment department of an insurance company, where I was first introduced to The Motley Fool (circa 2001) and found it to be the perfect fit for someone trying to learn about investing, my big break came when I was hired as an analyst by a well-respected Canadian investment manager.

The day I made a Foolish decision to stop "climbing the ladder"

Although I've gained invaluable experience working as an analyst in Canada's institutional investment industry (aka the "buy side") over the past decade-plus, as well as roping in a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation along the way, my exposure to Fool.com early in my career gave me a somewhat jaundiced view of it all, almost from the get-go.

The fees, the misaligned incentives, the fancy dinners, the flashy sales people ... they are all real, just like the Fool said they'd be. Don't get me wrong — it was fun. After all, who doesn't love being taken out to a fancy dinner by some flashy sales person? But, although I love investing, the industry and I never truly gelled. Something had to change.

That's why when an e-mail arrived out of the blue one day that said the Fool was beginning a blog network and was open to contributions from near and far, I recognized it as an opportunity to join an organization that carried a message I truly believed in. And then, when another e-mail popped up several months after I joined the blog network, announcing that The Fool was coming to Canada ... well, let's just say I got a little tingly.

Why I'm still a tingly investor ... and why you might be too

That brings us to today. And to the part of the story that stops being about ME and starts being about YOU.

With visits to our Fool.ca site growing by leaps and bounds since January, we have the chance to do something really special together. The kind of thing I always hoped for when I took a Foolish leap of faith and jumped off that "ladder."

So I'm honoured that you've chosen to spend a little bit of your investing time with me every day. And I look forward to meeting you here at Fool.ca tomorrow. (And every day after that.)

But I also want to get to know you better. And I want to have a deeper, more frequent, and more rewarding conversation about what our best options are as Canadian investors.

That's why I hope [you'll click on one of those little ads](#) I mentioned, and find out more about what's in store for us all, starting on October 1. It won't be glamorous either. Just Foolish. And I think you'll love it.

Sincerely,

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1. Investing

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