



**Dwight L. Hulse, MBA, MPA, CPA/CITP, CGMA, CA(BZ)**

**February 2021**

# The CFO Advisor

## Guidance for Small Business Success™



Welcome to the February 2021 edition of “The CFO Advisor” Newsletter!  
One month down and 11 more to go.

This month’s edition shares articles about how to deal with stress, tips for managing your time, the top marketing trends for 2021, and much more. Also read about how your business can still apply for a PPP loan, or even get a second PPP loan. That’s great news for business owners and a great way to start the year.

Until next month...

*Dwight L. Hulse, CPA/CITP, CGMA*



## More PPP Loan Funds Available For Small Businesses

There is additional money available from the Small Business Administration for a new round of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans courtesy of the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020.

Here’s what you need to know:

### Requirements to Take Out a 2nd PPP Loan.

If you received PPP loan proceeds in 2020, and wish to apply for a 2nd PPP loan, here are the qualifications:

- Your business must have 300 or fewer employees.
- Demonstrate a decrease in gross receipts of at least 25 percent in any quarter of 2020 compared to the same quarter in 2019.
- Have used or will soon use the entire amount of their first PPP loan.

### Requirements to Take Out an Initial PPP Loan.

If you didn’t take out a PPP loan in 2020, but wish to do so now, you can still apply for a PPP loan.

For an initial PPP loan, your business must have been open on or before February 15, 2020 and have 500 or fewer employees or independent contractors for whom the business paid salaries, compensation, and payroll taxes.



### Loan Forgiveness for the New PPP Loans.

As with the first round of PPP loans, the new loans are eligible to be entirely forgiven if certain requirements are met. There is even a simplified application for forgiveness if the loan amount is less than \$150,000. The maximum amount of a new round of PPP funding is \$2 million.

### How To Budget Money

If I have take-home pay of, say, \$2,000 a month, how can I pay for housing, food, insurance, health care, debt repayment, and fun without running out of money? That’s a lot to cover with a limited amount, and this is a zero-sum game.  
The answer is to make a budget.

- Calculate your monthly income, pick a budgeting method, and monitor your progress.
- There are different ways to go about creating a budget. If you haven’t tried the 50/30/20 rule – give it a try. Allow up to 50% of your income for needs. Leave 30% of your income for wants. Commit 20% of your income to savings and debt repayment.



## Franchises: Investigate Before You Invest In Franchises

Of the thousands of new businesses created every day in the United States, many are franchise outlets. If you've ever thought about buying a franchise, here are some facts worth considering.



A franchise gives the buyer the right to use a trademarked name in selling a product or service. The purchase of a franchise includes training, location assistance, inventory to get started, and advertising support. In addition, most franchises have a proven business model and a record of success.

There are costs connected with buying a franchise beyond the usual business expenses of payroll, rent, etc.

**First**, you must pay an initial franchise fee which can range from thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**Second**, you must also pay an ongoing royalty to the franchiser, which is typically a certain percent of sales.

**Third**, there are often separate payments and fees required to pay for advertising campaigns and administrative projects.

To research a franchise opportunity, start by looking over its Uniform Franchise Offering Circular. Details to review in addition to fees are territory size, training offered, competition, franchisee turnover, and termination rights. Next, interview as many current franchise operators as possible. Are they profitable? How long did it take to become profitable? Are they satisfied with the support they receive from the franchiser?

**Finally**, ask yourself some crucial questions. Are you really interested in the franchised product or service? Will you be able to devote the necessary time to the business? Do you have the financial resources to get the business up and running? Are the franchise name, training, and support worth the fees? If your answers are positive, you may have found the right route for starting your own business.



"We're not hibernating this year.  
Too much cultural change to keep up with."

## Dealing With Stress

Stress is a reaction to a situation where a person feels threatened or anxious. Learning healthy ways to cope and getting the right care and support can help reduce stressful feelings and symptoms.



After a traumatic event, people may have strong and lingering reactions. These events may include personal or environmental disasters, or threats with an assault. The symptoms may be physical or emotional. Common reactions to a stressful event can include:

- Disbelief, shock, and numbness.
- Feeling sad, frustrated, and helpless.
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions.
- Headaches, back pains, and stomach problems.
- Smoking or use of alcohol or drugs.

Feeling emotional and nervous or having trouble sleeping and eating can all be normal reactions to stress. Here are some healthy ways you can deal with stress:

- **Take care of yourself.** Eat healthy, exercise, get plenty of sleep, and give yourself a break if you feel stressed out.
- **Talk to others.** Share your problems and how you are feeling and coping with a parent, friend, counselor, doctor, or pastor.
- **Avoid drugs and alcohol.** These may seem to help, but they can create additional problems and increase the stress you are already feeling.
- **Take a break.** If news events are causing your stress, take a break from listening or watching the news.
- **Recognize when you need more help.** If problems continue or you are thinking about suicide, talk to a psychologist, social worker, or professional counselor.

### HOW TO PICK GRAPEFRUIT:

1. A ripe grapefruit will be slightly red in color. The deeper the color the more intense the flavor.
2. Look for grapefruits that feel plump with fairly smooth and thin skin. It should also feel heavy for its size.
3. Give the grapefruit a gentle squeeze.



### Are You In Need of a Trusted Business Advisor?

If you are not my client and would like to explore whether we might be a good fit, please contact me. As an experienced business advisor, I have worked not only in private and public industries but also across many functional areas and can help you implement best practice solutions to improve profits.



### Do You Have A Tough Accounting / Finance Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from my small business clients and friends who enjoy reading my monthly newsletter. I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have relating to small business.

If you have a question, tip or idea, please call me at 352-450-2880 or email me at [dwight@dlhulseconsulting.com](mailto:dwight@dlhulseconsulting.com). Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!



## 2021 Tax Filing Season Begins Feb. 12

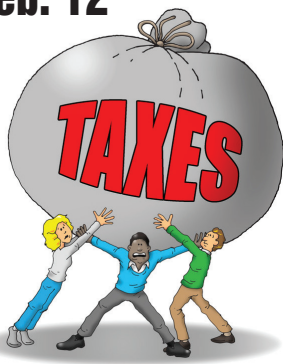
The Internal Revenue

Service announced that the nation's tax season will start on Friday, February 12, 2021, when the tax agency will begin accepting and processing 2020 tax year returns.

The February 12 start date for individual tax return filers allows the IRS time to do additional programming and testing of IRS systems following the December 27 tax law changes that provided a second round of Economic Impact Payments and other benefits.

This programming work is critical to ensuring IRS systems run smoothly. If filing season were opened without the correct programming in place, then there could be a delay in issuing refunds to taxpayers. These changes ensure that eligible people will receive any remaining stimulus money as a Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 tax return.

To speed refunds during the pandemic, the IRS urges taxpayers to file electronically with direct deposit as soon as they have the information they need. People can begin filing their tax returns immediately with tax software companies, including IRS Free File partners. These groups are starting to accept tax returns now, and the returns will be transmitted to the IRS starting February 12.



## With A Brand New Decade Rapidly Approaching, Here Are Five Of The Top Marketing Trends For 2021...

• **Facebook May Be Peaking. Really.** Facebook is no longer the kingpin in the social media world. According to Forbes, 41% of its users are over the age of 65. While it is by no means struggling, it's clear that Facebook is losing ground with the younger demographics, who tend to prefer the more visual, interactive experiences offered by Instagram, Snapchat, and the rising star, TikTok.

• **Instagram is a Hit with the Kids.** Instagram's meteoric rise has already seen it pass one billion users, an impressive achievement. That means it's one of the most rapidly growing social media platforms and, perhaps more importantly, much of its user base is the coveted younger demographic, especially under 30. Facebook is losing much of that cohort, due to its reputation as the social media platform for "old people."

• **Chatbots Will Dominate Customer Service.** Chatbots are artificial intelligence (AI) software that acts as a virtual "concierge," communicating with users and assisting them in completing their goals. Chatbots interact with humans in a natural way, primarily through the use of text chat windows, but verbal interactions are also possible. Over time, as the system collects more data insights, the AI learns more about the customers, making it possible to offer a continuously improving service.

• **Video is No Longer an Option.** If your business isn't already using video marketing, you should get on board this year. Text-based content simply can't compete with the power of video, especially when it comes to trying to sell products and services online.

In a mobile-mad world, people are watching more video than ever before, using smartphones to watch and share videos about everything, learning more about brands, and what they have to offer. Think about these stats from ImpactBND:

- 70% of consumers have shared a brand's video.
- 52% of consumers claim that watching product videos makes them more confident and guides their online purchasing decisions.
- 72% of businesses believe video content has improved their conversion rates.

• **Good Content Still Matters (and Now Context Matters More!).**

Content marketing continues to be an essential component of digital marketing, although there's an increasing emphasis on nuance in content. The quality is always going to matter, but now there's more emphasis on the context and targeting. Google is developing a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of online content, and so, marketers must think carefully about their target market and how they can tailor content more precisely in 2021.



**Quotes:** "Ill-health of body or of mind, is defeat. Health alone is victory. Let all men, if they can manage it, contrive to be healthy!" — **Thomas Carlyle**

"Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship." — **Buddha**

"A healthy attitude is contagious but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier." — **Tom Stoppard**

"The best six doctors anywhere and no one can deny it are sunshine, water, rest, air, exercise and diet." — **Wayne Fields**





## D.L. Hulse Consulting, LLC

I provide entrepreneurs with clarity and peace of mind for making better business decisions.

P.O. Box 357778, Gainesville, FL 32635-7778

www.dlhulseconsulting.com

Phone: (352) 450-2880

Email: dwight@dlhulseconsulting.com

### See What's Inside...

More PPP Loan Funds Available For Small Businesses

How To Budget Money

Franchises: Investigate Before You Invest In Franchises

Dealing With Stress • How to Pick Grapefruit

2021 Tax Filing Season Begins Feb. 12

Five Top Marketing Trends For 2021

You Don't Sleep Enough

Have You Looked At Your Social Security Statement Recently?

Soft Skills in The Workplace Are in Demand

*Disclaimer: Any accounting, business, or tax advice contained in this communication, is not intended as a thorough, in-depth analysis of specific issues, nor a substitute for a formal opinion, nor is it sufficient to avoid tax-related penalties.*



## You Don't Sleep Enough

If you don't get your ZZZs, your skin can start to wrinkle and sag early. That's in part because your body releases more cortisol, a "stress hormone" that breaks down the collagen that keeps your skin smooth and springy. Try to set up a quiet, soothing bedtime ritual with regular hours, and avoid alcohol, caffeine, and electronics before bed.

### Have You Looked At Your

## SOCIAL SECURITY

### Statement Recently?

You can get your personal Social Security Statement online by using your "my Social Security" account. If you don't yet have an account, you can easily create one. Your online Statement gives you secure and convenient access to your earnings records. It also shows estimates for retirement, disability, and survivors benefits you and your family may be eligible for.

Social Security will also mail paper statements to workers age 60 and older three months before their birthday if they don't receive Social Security benefits and don't yet have a my Social Security account.

### Soft Skills in The Workplace Are in Demand

Soft skills in the workplace are becoming increasingly important as organizations look to add additional value to their business. A study conducted by *Wonderlic* found that 93% of hiring leaders stated that soft skills are an "essential" or "very important" element when making hiring decisions. What's more, many employers reported that soft skills are more important than technical skills.

What are some of the soft skills to look for on your next hire?

- Attitude.
- Communication. (both listening and speaking skills).
- Work ethic.
- Teamwork.
- Leadership qualities.
- Time management.
- Decision making.
- Conflict resolution.
- Critical thinking.
- Networking.
- Empathy.
- Problem-solving.

