

CLIENT:  
Bob Weber

BANKER:  
Craig Love

CHALLENGES:

- ▶ Having high expectations
- ▶ Pitching him “the right” products
- ▶ A team approach to personal finance



# Bob Weber Gets What He Wants

His tenacity and high expectations for service colors Weber’s business and personal finance dealings



Bob Weber

Bob Weber’s life has been one of fulfillment and accomplishment in both the professional and personal arenas. After graduating from Penn State, he spent a number of years working for a major manufacturing firm selling big HVAC systems for office buildings.

Eventually, that firm discontinued its HVAC operation and Weber spent the next 10 years working as an independent manufacturers’ representative. “I was fairly successful but felt like a gypsy,” Weber recalls. “I wasn’t really building anything tangible in terms of a business I could resell and retire on.”

That changed around 1980, when Weber organized Dallas-based Flow Design, Inc., a company that designed and sold sophisticated flow-control valves used in large buildings to help maintain consistent flow rates over wide variations in pressure. “The process is called balancing the flow and it used to be done by hand at each of a series of valves located throughout the system,” he explains. “It was a very labor- and time-consuming process and not all that accurate. Our product was accurate to a tolerance of about 5%.”

Weber sold the firm in 2000 and stayed on with the acquirer, a subsidiary of a British conglomerate, for about two more years. Although he continues to do some consulting work, he is retired today and enjoys pursuing avocations that include cycling, kayaking and spending more time with his children and grandchildren.

Throughout his career, Weber focused on the sales side of the business, especially Flow Design’s worldwide network of manufacturers’ representatives. “The reps had exclusive territories, and we supported them with seminars and even went out on sales calls with them,” Weber relates. “I liked designing and selling these innovative products and working with the salespeople and manufacturers’ reps.”

## A STRONG RELATIONSHIP

That experience also gave Weber a unique perspective—and strong opinions—on the value of customer service and the important role relationships play in making it work. While he comes across in conversation as friendly and easy-going, Weber has the kind of tenacity that enabled him to finish Wichita Falls’ famous (or infamous) “Hotter’N Hell Hundred” 100-mile bicycle tour on a \$20 garage-sale bike the first time he decided to give cycling a try, in his late forties.

He knows what he wants and expects to get it and that applies to his financial dealings as well. As Weber puts it, “Some financial firms seem to put their objectives ahead of their customers’ needs. It’s almost like they’ve forgotten that it’s my money, not theirs.”

That’s not the case in his relationship with Compass Bank Wealth Management Group and Senior Investment Strategist Craig Love. Weber first met Love when the latter worked at a brokerage firm handling some of Flow Design’s business about 10 years ago. Today, Weber considers Love his chief financial advisor.

“Some brokers will never admit they don’t know something, but Craig’s not like that,” Weber says. “He is a no-nonsense, down-to-earth guy. We hit it off right away in terms of him understanding my goals, rationale and investment strategy.”

Two things that have particularly irked Weber in past dealings with financial firms are an apparent failure to recognize what’s important to him in financial management and the impersonal nature of interaction with the firms. Neither of those has been an issue with Compass, which manages joint accounts for Weber and his wife, his retirement savings and his father’s trust.

“Other brokers seemed most interested in pitching me products that would generate high commissions for them. That got under my skin,” Weber says. “Craig understands that I’m not trying to hit a bunch of home runs. I’ve always felt that he was looking out for me, that my goals came first. I like the personal attention and one-stop-shopping convenience I get from Compass.”

Love sees Weber’s comments as a confirmation that he is doing what he’s supposed to be doing. “Bob is the kind of client we attract. Those clients expect a higher level of service, much more customized and hands-on than what is found at other banks, and that’s exactly what the Wealth Management Group wants to provide them,” he says.

Love likens that kind of service to a football team of which he is the quarterback. “It is my relationship, but we provide Bob with a team approach to service. We try to put ourselves on the same side of the table as the client and that approach extends to every member of the team, from the trust officer to the branch manager.”

“We take a holistic approach, not just from the perspective of Bob’s investments with Compass Bank Wealth Management Group, but with all his other investments as well. We have a platform—SmarthPath®—to do that, which is hands-down better than anything else in the industry,” Love adds. “My business card has my cell phone number on it and Bob and my other clients know they can always reach me. At Compass, we’re not in the business of saying you can’t do that with your money; we’re in the business of making what you want happen.”