

# FINANCIAL PLANNER OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED



The Financial Planner of the Year 2009 was announced at the annual Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa (FPI) convention gala dinner at Emperors Palace, Kempton Park on 2 June.

Co-presented by the FPI and Personal Finance magazine, this year's award went to Alec Riddle, a Certified Financial Planner® at Money Talk Lifestyle Financial Planning in Port Elizabeth, who has eight years of experience in the financial services industry, focusing on lifestyle financial planning, retirement planning and estate planning.

Also a finalist in the 2008 competition, Riddle completed his teaching degree at UPE in 1984, majoring in mathematics, and subsequently completed his post-graduate studies at the University of the Free State in 2005. He currently lectures the third year students at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University on estate planning and is completing an advanced post graduate course on estate planning and risk management through Free State University.

Writer of a regular column for Business Link magazine and a regular contributor to the PE Express newspaper, Alec is often interviewed on radio about financial topics and conducts presentations on financial planning in an effort to improve financial literacy in his region.

A former national champion in three sporting disciplines, Riddle's achievements include a 21st position in the Comrades Marathon and victory in the SA Ultra Triathlon Championships. He recently came first in his age group in the half Iron Man competition, and is a renowned athletics coach and motivator, having coached five Olympians. Riddle believes that his coaching and motivating abilities assist him a great deal in motivating clients to achieve their lifestyle goals.

Jointly sponsored by the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa and Personal Finance magazine, the adjudication process

starts with the submission of a complex case study prepared by other industry professionals and marked by five independent adjudicators (45 per cent of total score). This is followed by site audits of the applicants' practices by another five judges (35 per cent). The final stage is face-to-face interviews with a five-member panel consisting of board and senior members of the FPI, and a Personal Finance representative (20 per cent).

Accepting the prestigious award, Alec said it was a privilege to be chosen. "As a fierce sporting competitor in my youth, I learnt from my dad never to focus on my opponents' strengths, or to question my own weaknesses ... success would go to the man who prepared best and believed in himself. This has worked for me on the sporting field and I think it helped me to stay focused in this competition and to believe in myself.

"This is a very tough competition, especially mentally, and is arguably my greatest achievement as sport came fairly naturally to me. I had to apply myself like never before and there was so much to learn.

"I know that no successful human being has ever achieved much without the aid of a great team, and at Money Talk we have an awesome team who live, breathe and work at doing their very best for our clients and the profession. We are also privileged to be guided by the FPI, who also strive for the best for the profession. I feel so blessed to be able to do what I enjoy and to be able to make a difference in people's lives," he said.

As the national winner, Alec will be profiled in Personal Finance, as well as other media; he will be an ambassador for the FPI over the next year, giving regional talks and presentations; and he will travel to an international Financial Planning conference of his choice and attend the

next FPI Annual Convention.

The other finalists for the Financial Planner of the Year Award 2009 were:

Spalding Fourie, an investment strategist and Certified Financial Planner with 12 years' experience, was appointed by First National Bank to head up the Investment Product House in June 2005. Prior to this, Spalding was employed at Sanlam for eight years in several capacities after launching his own training consultancy. Spalding completed a Bachelor of Commerce at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, and his honours and master's in industrial psychology at the University of Pretoria.

Reg Thomson obtained his LLB at the University of Witwatersrand in 1985 and practiced as an advocate until 1990. After completing the Institute of Life and Pension Advisers' examination in 1991, he joined Old Mutual as a legal adviser. In 1994, he moved to Investec Bank as national sales manager. He has completed his master of law degree in taxation at the University of Witwatersrand and his master's degree in philosophy. Reg has been a partner of the Bauer and Thomson Investment Group since 1999 (the business now trades as Roberts, Delport and Thomson Wealth Management).

Mike Sacks started his business MJ Sacks and Associates in 1989. Over the last 20 years, he has developed a team of highly motivated staff. As a result of his business model, Sacks is able to spend quality time with his clients, who are his main source of referrals. He completed the post graduate diploma in financial planning through the University of the Free State and is a CFP® professional member of the FPI.