



HENSE AND ASSOCIATES

Breaking the Mold and Redefining What it Means to be a CPA.

By Greg Smith

Hense and Associates has been in business for over 38 years. Hense brought his small business into fruition after working for several larger accounting firms and coming to the realization that “the rule book doesn’t say that work has to be hell.”

Needless to say this philosophy has served Hense and his five employees well over the years. “The work is hard, the pressure is terrible, but I don’t subject my employees to the constant demand for conformity,” says Hense, “after all, being able to live life out and express your own views is a gift that very few people get.”

The philosophy of Hense and Associates has not only made it a pleasant place to work, but it has also provided a level and quality of service that keeps the clients coming back for more. It may also explain why over 60 percent of Hense’s clients are in fact small businesses.

Hense does not hide the fact that he feels a great sense of pride and fulfillment in being a CPA and serving the small-business community. “The greatest contribution I have made is providing other small businesses with the resources and services that help them develop and grow their business.”

What Hense does not mention is the lasting impact he has made for the small-business community at large through his

leadership and involvement with NSBA. It was nearly 25 years ago that Hense first heard about NSBA through the Small Business Association of Michigan, an affiliate member of NSBA, and shortly thereafter joined.

“One of the things that I loved about NSBA was that it was a group of leaders who stood up for people who just didn’t have the time to do so themselves.” Hense continues to explain “the small-business community has provided me with a business for my whole adult life so I would certainly want to take care of that and pass it on to future generations.”

While Paul Hense is an active member of the small-business community and a champion for the growth of small business there is one foreseeable challenge that causes him to be concerned. “The biggest thing hurting the small-business community is the misguided concept that it’s too hard to run a small business and that owning a small business means sacrificing job security.” The way Hense sees it, “Job security now comes from what you can do. You can obtain security through your own ability, which has not always been the case.”

Hense and Associates is a clear example that leveraging your abilities and personality is one of the best ways you can truly be secure and happy with your job. ★

Tax season is undoubtedly the most dreaded time of the year for many small businesses. It elicits thoughts of introverted boring systematic suits, known as certified public accountants (CPA), invading the office to peruse over seemingly endless piles of financial statements and scrutinizing every piece of documentation. Anyone who has interacted with a CPA may find the stereotype cited above to hold true, but Paul Hense, owner and president of Hense and Associates, breaks the mold and redefines what it means to be a CPA.

Located in Grand Rapids, Michigan,