

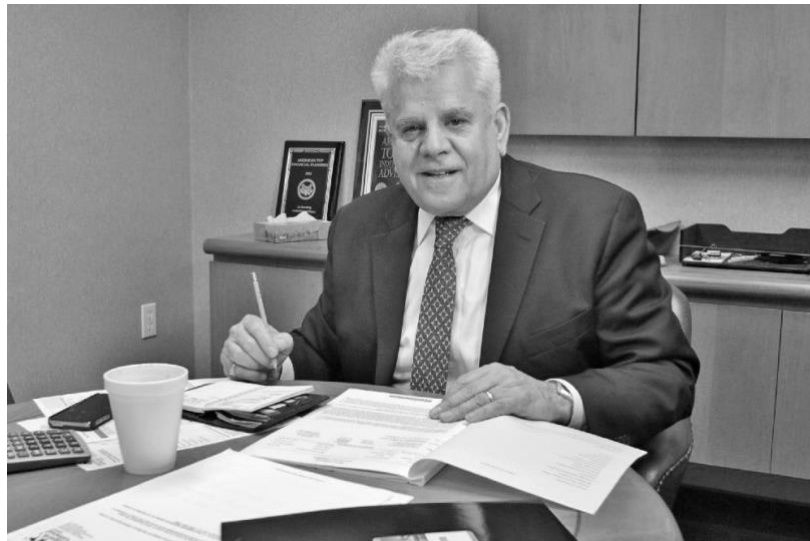
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5 Things You Should Ask Before You Purchase a Life Insurance Policy:  
“Decide whether you want to use life Insurance for its Death Benefits or for its Living Benefits” With Henry Montag



Matt Schmidt [Follow](#)

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*I had the pleasure of interviewing Henry Montag CFP, in practice since 1976. Henry has authored articles & acted as source for NYSBA, NYSSCPA, Bloomberg's Estates*

*Gift & Trust Journal, Trusts & Estate Magazine, & The WSJ. He has appeared as a guest on Wall Street Week, Fox Business News, & News 12. He provides CPE & CLE continuing education credits to NYSBA, ABA, NYSSCPA, & EPC. In 2017 he was asked to co-author an American Bar Association Flagship publication titled; "The Advisors' & Trustees' Guide to Managing Risk."*

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**Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you tell us a story about what brought you to this specific career path?**

When I was 16 I was a stock clerk in a drugstore. One evening an 'Estate Planner' came into the store to talk to the 2 owners about a buy sell agreement if one of them died. It was quiet in the store and I heard the entire conversation which I found very interesting, important, and easy to understand. After Grad school I started my career at the Connecticut General working exclusively in the business owner marketplace.

**Can you share a story about the funniest mistake you made when you were first starting in the industry? Can you tell us what lesson you learned**

No funny mistakes made. :-)

**Are you working on any exciting new projects now? How do you think that will help people?**

Over the last few years I've made a commitment to reach out to as many professional associations with CLE & CPE live presentations, webinars, and articles in their journals & magazines. In 2017 I was honored to co-author a Flagship book for the American Bar Association titled 'The Advisors' & Trustees' Guide to Managing Risk.' My current goal is to replicate the recent WSJ article info in other popular consumer periodicals. The more people that become aware of the fact that life Insurance is a 'Buy and Manage' asset rather than the often thought of 'Buy and Hold' asset that's typically placed in your drawer and forgotten about, will result in fewer life policies expiring prematurely.

**Are you able to identify a "tipping point" in your career when you started to see success? Did you start doing anything different? Is there a takeaway or lessons that others can learn from that?**

It wasn't until my 9th year in the Business that I paid out my first death benefit. At that point I realized that I wasn't selling an intangible, as it was a \$500,000 check to a young family that really needed the money to replace the husband's income & pay off debts. No training ever taught that aspect of the business. That's when I first began feeling comfortable asking for and getting referrals from other clients.

**What advice would you give to other people in the insurance field to thrive and avoid burnout?**

Best advice is 'Educate don't Sell' Forget about any type of industry or agency/company sales awards and or contests as that makes your needs more important than the clients' and that's just plain wrong. I've found that when you take the time to research an article or prepare for a presentation you always wind up learning much more than the audience your presenting to. You don't need to know everything, admit when you don't.



**As an “insurance insider”, you know much more about insurance than most consumers. If your loved one wanted to buy a policy from another person, which 5 things would you advise them to find out about before committing to a policy? Can you give an example or story for each?**

First things first. Determine if the person you're about to do business with is experienced, independent & has your best interest in mind, or theirs.

Have that Independent Life broker you've chosen compare & explain what you currently have, to what may be available in the marketplace today.

Decide whether you want to use life Insurance for its Death Benefits or for its Living benefits, then design product according to chosen strategy

If it's a TERM policy:

I'd of course want them to be aware of the Company's ratings

Determine if it's the best value for their premium dollars, as premiums for similar policies can range by as much as 25–30% between 'A' rated companies

I'd want them to know about their conversion options,

Till what age can they convert to?

Can they covert to any of the Insurers available products or are they limited to select few.

If it's a Universal policy:

I'd ask them who is going to take the responsibility to manage it as many Universal type policies require Active Management & Evaluations.

I'd make sure they were aware that there are Guaranteed duration's and Current duration's (Which can & have changed) and the costs for each. I'd want them to know that the more they pay the longer the guaranteed duration, and vice versa.

I'd ask them to find out if the company has recently requested an increase in their Cost of Insurance, or has already increased theirs.

I'd make certain they were clear on exactly how long their life policy would remain in force based on the premiums they were paying.

I'd find out what key features their existing policy has or doesn't have and compare that to what they want.



**Insurance agencies or companies are often known to be very creative and innovative marketers. Do you use any clever and innovative marketing strategies that you think large legacy companies should consider adopting?**

The only marketing I do is write articles, provide continuing education credits and bring interesting life Insurance topics to the media / press which I then have the opportunity to act as a source for. The fact that it can take 5–7 business days to get updated information about a person’s life Insurance policy is outdated. Imagine if you had to wait 7–10 business days to get info about your stock and bond portfolio. The technology is already there, it just needs to be implemented by the majority of Insurers content with the current situation of slow delayed information to the consumer.

**None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?**

When I first came into the Financial Services Industry it was with a company called the Connecticut General. While there I met an experienced gentleman who taught me the concept of “Teach clients what they don’t know, & then help them get what they want. Serve First, Do the Right Thing & your compensation will take care itself”. He took a liking to me before there was ever such a thing as a Mentor. Thanks Don

**You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. :-)**

My objective is to educate the consumer about the fact that if they continue to do nothing there's a good chance their policy will expire before they do.

The only way to prevent that from occurring is to make it public knowledge for consumers to know that their life Insurance portfolio requires active management and performance evaluations just like any stock /bond or real estate portfolio. You can certainly help... Thanks.

**How can our readers follow you on social media?**

The Only social media I do is on Linked In. If anyone is interested they can email me & I'll send them any new articles or webinars. Look at my website  
henry@thetolicentereast.com

**Thank you so much for joining us. This was very inspirational.**