



## **THE NEXT BIG DECISION** **( January 2011)**

It is that time of year again. You know. It's when your clients look back at last year, think about what went on, and plan what they want to make happen this year.

Only it is not that simple this time around, is it? The last two years have been challenging in Michigan, to say the least. We have a new governor, new Congress, and tax rates extended another two years. But with massive federal and state deficits, high unemployment, rising energy and commodity prices, and uncertainty around bank lending, health of the US dollar, health care, future tax exposure and foreign competition, does anyone feel comfortable about what lies ahead?

Our practice at Fulcrum Partners, which has traditionally been focused on Merger & Acquisition transactions, has taken on more of an advisory role. Transition issues for owners of mid-size businesses are still with us, but more often than not the issue in this uncertain economic environment has been – “This isn't the right time to sell, but what do I do next?”

Owners of mid-size businesses have big decisions to make. They have cut costs, deferred capital expenditures and pursued conservative survival strategies. Now they are asking themselves questions like:

- How can I grow the size and value of my business to ensure I achieve my long term objectives?
- How do I get access to capital for expansion or acquisition?
- How can I restructure my company, to take some money out of the business or buy out a partner?
- How can I position my business for eventual transition of ownership?
- When is the right time to act?

In simple terms, “How Do I Plan for My Next Big Decision?”

As you may know, what sets Fulcrum Partners apart from others in the M&A space is the depth of our operational experience. We know how to get mid-size businesses on the right track. We educate owners on the issues, then provide tools and coaching to help them find the best window of opportunity to achieve their objectives.

In the coming weeks we will offer some plain talk on how we go about the process. If you find these messages may be helpful to some of your clients, we encourage you to pass them along. If there is interest in discussing a specific situation, we would be happy to schedule a confidential exploratory discussion.

In the mean time please visit the consulting section on our website ([www.fulcrumpartners.biz](http://www.fulcrumpartners.biz)) for more insight into how we approach the challenges these owners face.