

MONEY

Financial adviser caters to needs of female investors

by **Russ Wiles** - Jul. 3, 2009 11:30 AM
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Theresa Krueg still remembers the phone call that convinced her to climb the ladder in the financial-advisory business.

She had just started as a customer-service representative at Charles Schwab and fielded a call from a woman who had lost her husband. The woman wanted to talk to a female adviser, but Krueg had to transfer the call elsewhere in the firm because she wasn't qualified to give financial advice.

"There weren't, and still aren't enough, role models for women in finance," she said.

Motivated by that caller, Krueg earned her securities license about six months later and gradually worked her way up in the securities industry.

Today she's a vice president and senior adviser in the Chandler office of WealthTrust Arizona.

It has been quite a career shift for Krueg, 50, who grew up on a dairy farm in upstate New York, worked as a butcher to help pay for college, sought a career in law enforcement but eventually wound up at the Postal Service - all while raising four children.

Krueg credits her blue-collar background with helping her succeed in a decidedly white-collar field. She considers it critical to listen carefully to clients, make complex financial terms easy to understand and work hard to support clients.

"Don't work less than 10 hours a day ever," she said.

Krueg also feels it helps to be an independent adviser, which allows her to recommend any investments without strings attached. Plus, her firm's fee-only focus better aligns her interests with those of clients, she said.

Krueg focuses on properly allocating client portfolios to minimize volatility. She mixes stocks and bonds with commodities, real estate and other so-called "alternative" investments to keep risk down.

She considers it critical to develop a suitable investment plan for each client, explain it well and stay in contact with review sessions conducted at least once a quarter.

All this personal contact is especially important for women clients, she believes, since women, in her view, tend to be more risk-averse than men.

In her free time, Krueg likes to ski, rollerblade, crochet and exercise. She sees investing as most similar to another passion, cooking, because it involves coming up with a recipe suited to each person's tastes.

"You learn to put in a little of this or leave out a little of that," Krueg said. "In general, most people don't like things too spicy."