



Depending on whom you ask, career aptitude tests can be perceived as valuable psychological tools or dressed-up *BuzzFeed* quizzes. In Richard Feldstein's case, it doesn't matter which is true, just that the one he took decades ago at the UC Berkeley career center happened to be right.

"My father passed away when I was 11. So by the time I was entering college, I was pretty much self-sufficient financially," Feldstein recalls, adding that he knew he'd have to find a well-paying job after graduation for that to continue. He wasn't sure exactly what that was, though, so he took the test. "They said, 'Oh, you'd make a pretty good accountant.' That kind of popped off the screen to them."

These days, Feldstein is much more than a pretty good accountant. He's a veteran business manager of nearly 50 years, advising A-listers across entertainment, including Adam Levine, Kate Hudson and Paul Rudd.

Feldstein grew up on Long Island before his family moved

Richard Feldstein was photographed Oct. 4 at PMC Studios in Los Angeles.



## A ROCK STAR BUSINESS MANAGER

Richard Feldstein, *THR*'s 2022 Business Manager Icon, reflects on nearly 50 years in the industry — and that time he took a red-eye to get a band out of IRS trouble

### Martin Meeks and Aaron Philpott PHILPOTT MEEKS

Meeks says that, until this year, low interest rates combined with higher-than-normal market returns have allowed for people to increase their spending without seeing their wealth drop. He now advises, "Time to get back to the basics: Spend less, save more." Hollywood's most influential power players, including Dick Wolf, Jerry Bruckheimer and Nicolas Cage, turn to Meeks and Philpott to manage their finances. The duo are proud to say most of their clients haven't bought into the crypto craze. Says Meeks, "All the crypto fanatics have been awfully quiet."

**The best piece of advice I've ever received ...**

**MEEKS** "You can have anything you want, you just can't have everything."

### Michael Ullman PLATINUM FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

For Ullman, sustainability is at the forefront of this year's financial trends. "I see more clients buying electric vehicles, installing solar panels and making sure part of their investment portfolio is in green markets," Ullman notes. With a client list including Margot Robbie, Miles Teller, Linda Cardellini and Brooke Shields, Ullman is grateful

that his firm continued to expand this year amid the ongoing uncertainty of a postpandemic landscape.

**One thing that's always in my refrigerator/pantry**  
"Pickles and sparkling water"

### Barry Siegel, Jeff Turner and Bill Vuylsteke PROVIDENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

After the live music industry took a major hit due to the pandemic, Vuylsteke — who reps such big-time bands and musicians as Green Day, Weezer, Sheryl Crow and Red Hot Chili Peppers — says that "getting everyone back on the road is really exciting." With offices in California and Nashville, Provident's clients also include Al Pacino, Elijah Wood, Lucy Liu and Angela Bassett.

**My theme song would be ...**

**VUYLSTEKE** "You Can't Always Get What You Want"

### Tara Beaudine-Moore, Abner Monegro and Phil Sarna PS BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

As artists return to the stage, Beaudine-Moore has seen an increase in residency-style performances, which she expects to continue. "Fans can make traveling to a destination to see their favorite artist part of the fun," she says. This firm has a keen eye on the entertainment

space thanks to an in-demand roster including Billie Eilish, Halsey, Lizzo and Benny Blanco. Sarna adds that clients' cultural relevance is creating opportunities with corporate partners.

**One thing that's always in my refrigerator/pantry**  
**BEAUDINE-MOORE** "All the cheese."

### Jason Brown, Anna DerParseghian and John Power PTD BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

During the past year, DerParseghian, who advises the likes of Yvonne Strahovski and Uzo Aduba, says she's seen more artists taking control of and monetizing their own content. "Female clients are writing roles for themselves and creating material that was not available to them previously," she notes. She's also a proud investor in the Angel City Football Club, which she says is "exhilarating and eye-opening." Meanwhile, Brown says his comedian clients are reinvigorated to be back on tour, "which led to them recording fantastic hourlong specials in front of diehard fans."

**If I could trade places with anyone in Hollywood for a day, it would be ...**

**BROWN** "The Rock"  
**DERPARSEGHIAN** "Geena Davis"

Photographed by **Josh Telles**



to L.A. when he was 14. After graduating from Berkeley with a business degree in 1973, he started his career in the audit department at Price Waterhouse in New York. He made the jump to business management two years later, after he moved back to L.A. with his wife, Sharon. Feldstein's uncle, TV director Alan Raffkin, had been college roommates with industry icon Marshall Gelfand, and that led to a job and a new path.

"Marshall was a very good person and an excellent mentor," says Feldstein. "But after seven years there, the last four as a partner, I decided going on my own would move my career along faster because I was starting to generate clients." (The first Hollywood client he signed, *Taxi*'s Marilu Henner, is still a close friend.)

Since then, his practice has grown and diversified, in part thanks to the help of "nice referrals" from clients, entertainment lawyers, agents and managers.

"I met Rich over two decades ago through a client who was

working with him. I thought he was exceptional at his job and a pleasure to deal with, so I referred him to several clients, who equally benefited from his intelligence and expertise," says Aleen Keshishian, founder of Lighthouse Management + Media. "In addition to being brilliant at his job, he has a personal quality that makes people feel like he is a member of their family and that you can trust him. He is always available and willing to answer any question at any time."

Alan Epstein, co-chair of Willkie Farr & Gallagher's entertainment transactions group, lauds Feldstein's decision-making skills. "He's able to digest complex facts and circumstances and make clear, practical recommendations to his clients," says Epstein. "He's also really steady and stays calm in challenging situations. He does it all right."

Over the years, those challenges have included handling tour logistics with a lot of moving parts. Feldstein notes, "When you're running 25 trucks and 12 buses and charter flights, it's quite a massive undertaking."

He also prides himself on being able to problem-solve for clients. "I've done things like getting on an overnight flight to

Washington, D.C., to meet with the IRS about a non-U.S. rock band that had not previously filed their taxes appropriately in this country," he recalls. "This is before the withholding agreements became routine. We met with them at length and were able to get an agreement in place."



Keshishian



Epstein

Feldstein is a partner at business management behemoth NKSFB, where he's been since 2007. His colleague Melissa Earnhart says his clients and colleagues stay with him for the long run because he's the "best at connecting with people and making them feel valued."

During his time in the industry, there has been significant transformation — "Computers were a huge change," he notes — but his core philosophy has remained consistent: "I'm an old-school pretty conservative guy with my own money," he says. "Entertainers, like ballplayers, can have a short career or a long career, one never knows. So I preach being conservative with money, with saving, with asset allocation. Some of the wealthiest clients I have out-earn their

spending pattern, shall we say, but it doesn't always work out that way."

Feldstein adds, "I give a lot of credit to people who survive in the business management world because it keeps getting increasingly complex, not only from an advisory point of view, but the compliance work is extraordinarily more complex today than it was when I started. As good as the business has been to me, I'm not sure if I was counseling a super bright business student that I would tell them to go into accounting because the hours, the stress and the wear and tear on relationships can be trying."

When Feldstein isn't at the office, he's spending time with his close-knit family. He's been married to Sharon — whom he met while working as a camp counselor in the Poconos — for 47 years. Together, they've raised three children, actors Jonah Hill and Beanie Feldstein and late music manager Jordan Feldstein, and have two grandkids.

He says: "If my grandchildren want to go into business and asked me, I'd say, 'Great. Get an MBA, go to work at Goldman Sachs for a couple of years and find out which end of the business you like and go from there.'"

And if that aptitude test he took at Berkeley decades ago had been inconclusive? Says Feldstein playfully, "I would be a rock star." — A.C.

## "RICH HAS A QUALITY THAT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL LIKE HE IS A MEMBER OF THEIR FAMILY."

ALEEN KESHISHIAN

### Lia Sweet and Bill Zysblat RZO

"Post-COVID attitudes have changed dramatically," says Sweet. "We are seeing less spending on the most extravagant items, like boats and planes, as the industry realizes there are events beyond anyone's control which can put an immediate stop to earnings." The duo, along with RZO partner Tom Cyrana, advise a who's who of music acts: The Rolling Stones, Sting, Lady Gaga and U2. As touring picks back up, Zysblat notes, "The trend to work and tour in a bubble, limiting guests backstage, limiting the leaving of hotels, is becoming the norm."

**My theme song would be ...**

**SWEET** "Money Changes Everything"

**ZYSBLAT** "Taxman" by The Beatles

### Matthew Burke SINGER BURKE

Burke is a go-to adviser for behind-the-scenes power players including showrunners and other creatives involved with *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Yellowjackets*, *The Witcher* and *Bridgerton*. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Encino-based firm, which is a pioneer in using database technology and software. "The pandemic accelerated adoption of technology that has facilitated

not only more flexibility in our work but also tremendous growth," Burke says. "We've increased our headcount around 20 percent and grew our investment assets under management beyond the \$1 billion mark."

### Steve Campeas SJC BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

L.A.-based Campeas works with influencers and stars like Chiwetel Ejiofor, Katee Sackhoff, Lana Condor, Rebecca Romijn, Lala Kent and John Stamos. He prioritizes both building long-term wealth and covering short-term financial needs even in volatile markets. Campeas notes a "continued increase in the sums of money being made by social influencers," and adds that "clients are becoming more aware of world issues and the effects they have on them personally and financially."

**The best place to buy a second (or third) home in 2023**  
"Valencia, Spain"

### Joel Mandel, Rob Mandel and Erica Wright THE MANAGEMENT GROUP

Though they avoid talking to the press about themselves and their clients, this trio has built key relationships in Hollywood and comes highly recommended by reps for some of the biggest names in the industry. Through

public records and other research, the firm has been linked to a starry client roster of actors (Michelle Williams, Gwyneth Paltrow, Bryce Dallas Howard), directors (Judd Apatow), writers (Steve Levitan, Greg Daniels) and producers (Brad Falchuk, Evan Goldberg and Peter Chernin).

### Phil Ramos THXPHIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Celebrating his firm's seventh anniversary servicing Hollywood talent, Ramos has noticed that clients are becoming more fiscally conservative. "Work includes making sacrifices, like being away from home for long periods of time," says Ramos, whose clients like *John Wick* helmer Chad Stahelski and action movie duo David Leitch and Kelly McCormick (*Bullet Train*) are always in demand. "It has created a deeper sense of appreciation for the fruits of that labor — and less interest in unnecessary spending."

**One thing that's always in my refrigerator/pantry**  
"Cocoa Pebbles has been my guilty pleasure for years."

*Profiles written by Winston Cho, Kirsten Chuba, Aaron Couch, Mia Galuppo, Caitlin Huston, Katie Kilkenny, Sydney Odman, Christy Piña, Georg Szalai, Etan Vlesing and Alex Weprin*