



# SOLUTIONS



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HOW RICK DOPUCH IS REINVENTING SERVICE



# Reinventing the Client- Accountant Relationship

This firm specializes in **going beyond tax and accounting services**, delivering a better model for profit and growth.

**Business in Balance would rather you didn't think of them simply as a tax and accounting firm. Instead, the Chesterfield, Mo.-based company acts as a Back End Support Team™—or B.E.S.T.™**

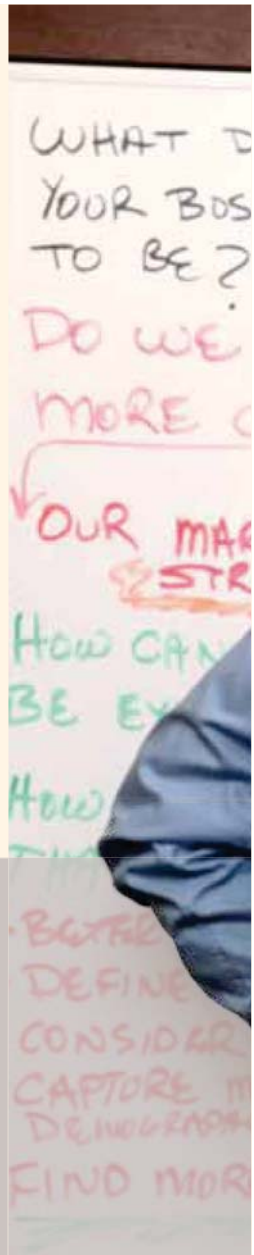
According to Client Services Manager Rick Dopuch, the firm's B.E.S.T. services include business coaching, monthly financial statements, tax strategy management and business tax return preparation. It also features something the firm calls Encouragability™, which defines the combination of encouragement and accountability the firm offers.

Business in Balance provides this package of services to about 90 business clients for a fixed fee that

ranges from \$250 to \$6,000 per month. The firm also offers payroll processing and extended business development sessions for an additional fee.

Ultimately, everything the firm offers is designed to help small businesses grow and be more profitable.

"We actually spend more time talking about how companies can better operate their business in order to improve profit and growth than we do talking about their financial statements," says Dopuch. "But our monthly financial statements are a primary tool we use to manage our clients' tax strategy and help them make the best possible financial decisions."





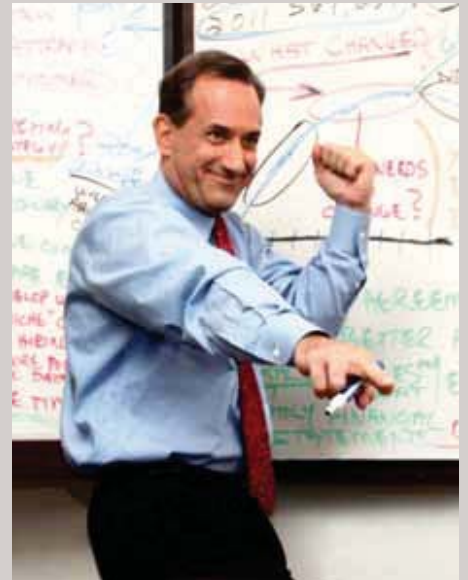
We're here to transform small business owners into highly effective managers, leaders, and entrepreneurs.

## FIRM FACTS

❖ **BASICS:** Founded in 1987, **Business in Balance** is based in Chesterfield, Mo., and employs a staff of nine. The firm specializes in business growth coaching, business and personal income tax preparation and planning, financial statement compilation, payroll processing, and monthly bookkeeping services.

❖ **WEBSITE:** The firm offers a wealth of information and resources, including a secure client portal created using NetClient CS, at **bnbalance.com**.

❖ **SOFTWARE:** The firm relies on a number of Thomson Reuters tools, including UltraTax CS, FileCabinet CS, Practice CS, Accounting CS, Accounting CS Payroll, Fixed Assets CS, NetClient CS, and ToolBox CS.



“We spend three or four hours filling up a large white board with actionable strategies.”

—Rick Dopuch

#### A VISION FOR SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS

The way Dopuch sees it, accounting, payroll, and tax services are available from a multitude of accountants. But very few really know how to coach clients toward successfully driving profit and growth.

“Our dream is to bring balance to small business owners while engaging their dreams,” he explains. “As our clients’ primary trusted advisor, we are committed to pursuing the process of transforming their small business while keeping score of the results.”

Business in Balance’s vision is to build a client-centered system of encouragement and accountability—Encouragability—while building a personal relationship that leads the way to balancing profit and growth.

“We work side by side with our clients to reduce their tax burden, improve their accounting

systems and inspire them to balance profit and growth,” says Dopuch. “We’re here to transform small business owners into highly effective managers, leaders, and entrepreneurs.”

The process Business in Balance uses to develop profit and growth starts with asking each client to do some homework. First, they read a book called “The E-Myth Revisited,” which explores why so many small businesses fail and how to avoid those pitfalls. Then they answer 80 questions about themselves and their business.

According to Dopuch, the book helps clients shift their thinking toward working more on their business, while the questions help the firm identify problems the client might need help working on.

Next, a tax-saving strategy is set into motion and updated accounting systems are implemented. Business in Balance also meets with the client for a business development coaching session.

“We spend three or four hours filling up a large white board with actionable strategies and ideas for increasing profit and growth in their business,” says Dopuch. “By the time they get back to their office, they have an encouraging email waiting for them with a

► Sometimes, it’s the little things that keep the team at Business in Balance focused on the primary goal of client service. One example: Each file has a color photo of the client—maybe even with his or her family—on the front. “It’s a reminder that this isn’t just a file,” says Dopuch. “These are real people who are inside that folder, and it’s our job to work as hard as we can for them.”

picture of the white board action strategy we worked through together. Clients love that.”

#### FROM THE INSIDE, OUT

The firm’s concept of Encouragability has expanded to include Management Encouragability™, a process that urges clients to set aside time for developing new strategies and management duties that can increase growth and profit.

“We encourage and remind clients about their commitment to work on their business while they work in their business by sending emails and calling to check in on their progress,” says Dopuch. “By focusing our clients on renewing vision, finding resources, creating better systems, assigning accountability to employees, and improving their products and services, they’re much more likely to be successful—and they usually are.”

#### FINDING SOLUTIONS THAT WORK BEST

Because of the amount of time Business in Balance spends working with clients initially, they are selective about the businesses they take on.

They’re also particular about the tools they use in their own operation. Dopuch chose Thomson Reuters because he wanted efficient, integrated software and a strong electronic document management system.

“Practice CS has dramatically changed how we communicate with our clients, saving us time and frustration,” he says. “We now have dozens of standard client letters that go out like clockwork based on the time of year and assigned contact categories. Our annual questionnaire and tax strategy reminder letter uses standard information, plus important custom-tailored information and instructions for each client.”

Processing payroll using Accounting CS Payroll helps Business in Balance manage its clients’ tax strategy efficiently. The firm can easily adjust client tax withholdings, salary, bonuses, and taxable fringe benefits as needed, without having to rely on an outside payroll company.

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—Rick Dopuch

Dopuch is focused on his business, but equally devoted to his wife and two children. He’s an art lover who collects works by Siegfried Reinhardt, and recently took up photography as a hobby.

#### HELP AT HAND

The idea of balance extends from his personal life to his professional life, where he acknowledges the importance of everyone’s contributions.

“We have a systems innovation procedure that everyone participates in when changes are being considered,” Dopuch explains. He believes you can’t build a successful business without help from others, so he thanks the organizations the firm works with, PASBA and especially Thomson Reuters, and the firm’s dedicated staff.

“I think what accounts for our success over the years is being driven by a continuous desire to learn and to serve our clients better tomorrow than we did today.”

**BEST PRACTICE**  
Practice CS has dramatically changed how the firm communicates with clients, according to Dopuch. Hear other professionals talk about the program at [CS.ThomsonReuters.com/PracticeCS](https://www.cs.thomsonreuters.com/PracticeCS).



## Selective Service

Business in Balance applies significant energy toward developing a unique package of services for every client. For that reason, the firm is selective about the clients it takes on.

“We generally don’t work with start-ups, because the mortality rate for new businesses is so high,” says Client Services Manager Rick Dopuch. “It would be a really poor business model for us to spend a bunch of time on start-ups only to have so many of them go out of business. It takes a little while for us to start making money on any of our clients because of our front-end time investment and our flat fee basis.”

Dopuch has also found that businesses that have been in operation for at least three years tend to be better listeners. “They’ve already gone through discovering they don’t know everything,” he says, “so they’re more willing to try the new ideas we present to them.”