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**CEOs Must Protect Their Companies' Reputations**  
*Financial Knowledge is Key for Avoiding Public Embarrassment*

**Los Angeles, Calif. (February 20, 2008)**—A recent *Wall Street Journal* front page article uncovered what could be every CEO's worst nightmare—a con artist is sneaking into the conference calls of major corporations by posing as a noted securities analyst and asking CEOs ridiculous, often nonsensical financial questions...and the CEOs are attempting to answer them.

“This is exactly why everyone in any sort of managerial position, particularly at a publicly-traded company, should have at least a basic knowledge of finance,” says Gene Siciliano, author of *Finance for Non-Financial Managers* (McGraw-Hill, 2003). “~~These~~ ~~Some of these~~ people, the leaders of their companies, don't recognize when a financial question doesn't even make sense—that's a problem.”

The reality is that, as the article states, CEOs rely far too heavily on the knowledge of their financial managers, a problem that this con artist is making all too clear. Even simple steps, such as trying to restate the question in a way that you fully understand what is being asked, can improve a CEO's chance of properly analyzing the legitimacy of a question.

While no one expects the CEO to be able to answer complicated, in-depth questions about his or her company's finances, a basic understanding of [financial terminology](#) and the company's financial [state-condition](#) is key. Siciliano recommends financial training, which will help company leaders ~~to~~ weed out questions that appear to be invalid.

“No one is expecting the CEO to be a financial master, but the leader of a company should be at least financially literate enough to be able to discern the validity of a question,” says Siciliano. “The whole purpose of financial coaches such as myself is to help managers avoid exactly ~~this~~ ~~the~~ sort of situation ~~that this~~ con artist is perpetrating. Now is the time for CEOs to take control of their financial knowledge so that they can avoid any possible public ramifications caused by a similar situation.”<sup>2</sup> [Non-financial executives can no longer afford to be non-financial.](#)”

For more information about Gene Siciliano, please visit [www.GeneSiciliano.com](http://www.GeneSiciliano.com). To schedule an interview with him, please contact Leyna McKenney at The Ictus Initiative, (617) 840-4689 or [Leyna@IctusInitiative.com](mailto:Leyna@IctusInitiative.com). For the complete text of the *Wall Street Journal* article, visit <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120301945499169247.html>.

*Gene Siciliano, a former CFO and CPA with over 30 years of financial and general management experience, has held top financial management positions with Computer Sciences Corporation, Epson America, and Superscope, Inc., among others. As a consultant, he has acted as Chief Financial Officer for over a dozen companies—both publicly traded and privately owned—earning himself the title “Your CFO for Rent.” A member of the National Speakers Association, Gene is also the author of Finance for Non-Financial Managers (McGraw-Hill, 2003).*

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