



# INSURANCE LEADERSHIP PODCAST

*Tools for success in the industry*

## Millionaire Milestones

### *Episode 55 Show Notes*

Markets are volatile, sales cycles are unpredictable, and leadership requires more clarity than ever. In this episode of the *Insurance Leadership Podcast*, host Casey Combest welcomes back Sam Dogen—better known as the *Financial Samurai*. After retiring from Wall Street at the age of 34, Sam launched his blog in 2009 to share practical financial insights that have since reached millions worldwide. With his newest book, *Millionaire Milestones: Simple Steps to Seven Figures*, Sam joins us to talk about building wealth intentionally, avoiding lifestyle traps, and preparing for the freedom to choose your future.

From forecasting your misery to celebrating small wins, Sam's timeless lessons apply directly to sales professionals, brokers, and leaders looking to secure their financial independence while leading well today.

### Forecast Your Misery to Fuel Your Future

Sam introduced the idea of forecasting your misery, which means anticipating the seasons when a once-exciting career may start to feel routine or draining. By looking ahead, leaders can use that foresight as motivation to save and invest more aggressively—rather than drifting through decades with little preparation.

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*Leaders in insurance and sales often face burnout from repetitive cycles. By building financial options now, you create freedom to pivot later, renew your energy, or pursue new opportunities without being forced into them.*

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### Managing Inconsistent Income Streams

For producers and brokers, income is rarely steady. Sam advises calculating a baseline average and budgeting around that figure, regardless of whether commissions spike or dip. Celebrate

wins but resist the urge to inflate your lifestyle after a strong month. Staying disciplined ensures long-term stability and freedom.

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*Just as producers must build consistency in prospecting to ensure reliable pipelines, they must also apply discipline to their personal finances. Long-term financial health, like long-term sales growth, is the result of steady habits compounded over time.*

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### Celebrate Wins Without Losing Focus

Sam reflected on his early career and admitted he often pushed forward without celebrating milestones. Over time, he realized that celebrating client wins, bonuses, and promotions—even in small ways—builds motivation and reminds us of the joy of progress.

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*Recognition is a core part of leadership. Sales leaders who acknowledge achievements keep teams engaged and motivated, and financial leaders who celebrate small personal wins stay focused for the long journey to independence.*

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### Investing with Perspective in 2025 and Beyond

The volatility of 2025 underscored the importance of aligning investments with personal risk tolerance. Sam recommends a balanced approach, allocating risk assets such as stocks and real estate, while maintaining stability through bonds and cash equivalents. Honest self-assessment is crucial—if a market downturn shakes your confidence, it may be time to rebalance.

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*Insurance leaders can apply this same perspective to client solutions—balancing growth-focused products with security-driven ones. Diversification and alignment with true comfort levels aren't just principles for investing; they're also leadership practices that build resilient teams and organizations.*

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## Conclusion

Sam Dogen's journey reminds us that financial independence is about more than money—it's about leadership over your future. By forecasting the seasons of hardship, managing variable income with discipline, celebrating wins along the way, and investing with perspective, leaders in insurance and beyond can carve out true freedom of choice.

At ILP, we believe leadership extends to your financial health as much as it does your professional role. Take the lessons from today's conversation and start writing your own *Millionaire Milestones*.

## What's Next on the Insurance Leadership Podcast

In our November episode, cohosts Ryan Eaton, Ben Markland, and Casey Combest come together for a candid roundtable on leadership. From the pressures of hitting year-end numbers to preparing teams for a fast-changing 2026, the trio will share behind-the-scenes lessons on what it takes to lead well in today's insurance landscape.

You won't want to miss this conversation—it's honest, practical, and packed with takeaways you can apply as you close out the year and plan ahead.

## Let's Keep the Conversation Going!

Got a topic idea or guest suggestion? We want to hear from you! Help shape the future of the Insurance Leadership Podcast by reaching out.

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