

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Tom Gardner, co-founder of the Motley Fool

These Fools and their money stick together.

By Wendy Marinaccio

Tom Gardner and his brother Dave co-founded the Motley Fool (**Fool.com**), a web site offering news, editorial and discussion boards about investing and personal finance. The two also host a weekly radio show, oversee a syndicated newspaper column and have written four bestselling books. Using humor and straightforwardness, the Gardners communicate that individuals are the best people to handle their own money.

Tom Gardner says the Motley Fool is his first serious job. "I have to say, coming to work is a tremendous amount of fun. I realize from talking to a lot of my friends how fortunate I am for that," he says. After majoring in English and Creative Writing at Brown and then going into finance, Gardner says, "It surprised all my friends. People still look at me and go, 'You?' But I still see a lot of humanities in what we're doing. I do a lot of writing. I don't think I'll ever leave behind my interest in creative writing."

Age: 32

Born: Philadelphia, raised in Washington, D.C.

Current Offices: Alexandria, Virginia

College: Brown, '90, with honors

Marital Status: Single

Favorite singer: Bob Dylan (Favorite Dylan song: bootleg version of "Lay Lady Lay," sung "in a beautiful tenor voice, before he started smoking opium").

Favorite web site: Encyclopedia Britannica (**eb.com**)

Currently reading: *The Road to Surfdom* by libertarian thinker Friedrich Hayek; *Darwin's Ghost* by geneticist Steve Jones

Favorite food: Salmon, although Stonyfield yogurt is gaining ground

Investing role model: His dad, a small shareholder who took the kids on vacations to visit companies he invested in. He taught Tom and Dave "Number one, there's a face to business; number two, let's make jokes about them now that we've met them."

Motley Fool core principle: Civil and open debate. "We have regular debates from which no one holds grudges. The real value of our service is that you're encouraged to ask questions and to challenge us."

What he looks for when hiring a college student: Impatience. "If you have someone who has creative ingenuity or spirit they've probably been frustrated by college. Someone who wants to have fun and understands our core philosophy. I look for somebody who might just as well be inclined to start their own business."

On friends: "My best friends I met in college."

For the complete *Steamtunnels* profile with Tom Gardner, go to Steamtunnels.net and search for keyword "Fool."



Business advice from Dad: "Number one, there's a face to business. Number two, let's make jokes about them now that we've met them."