



Swimming in a Financial Ocean of Sharks and Whales: How a Small Fish Feeds (Makes Money) Off Wall Street

Melvin C. Duniya

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The best comprehensive introductory book on understanding how to invest and trade in the stock market. The book introduces the reader to the fundamentals of understanding the stock market starting from the evolution of an economy and the three (3) sectors: agriculture, manufacturing, and service. The economy is described as water and the financial markets as a financial ocean where there are investors (whales) and traders (sharks) buying and selling stocks and other financial instruments for financial gain. Moving from the economy to businesses, the book introduces three (3) basic business formations, sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations, found in every sector of the economy. The reader learns that it is the corporation that sells stock to the public through financial market exchanges. The book explains how to read financial statements like income statements and balance sheets and how an investor can participate in the financial ocean by buying and selling company stock and stock derivatives—stock options. A detailed explanation of options is presented; call options and put options and how and why they are used by investors and traders is explained. The characteristics of options are listed, the reader learns that option prices are affected by the underlying stock price, the strike price, time to expiration, price volatility, interest rates, and dividends. Some option trading strategies are also introduced.

A history of the stock markets and stock exchanges is given. Portfolio managers and their investment theories and strategies are discussed including the Efficient Market Hypothesis (EMH), which contends that the market is efficient and stock prices move randomly. The reader learns that the two (2) major market theories: the firm foundation theory and the castle in-the-air theory of investing are based on the hypothesis that the stock market, and individual stock prices cannot be predicted based on past movements and thus an investor cannot expect to outperform the market by relying on past stock prices. Other market theories such as: discounting, which involves estimating all the future dividends that a company is expected to pay to its shareholders over the years and then calculating a price for the stock based on those discounted future dividends; and value investing which involves finding companies that are selling for prices below their intrinsic values and then selling them when their prices rise above their intrinsic values are also explained. Two (2) new investment methods are also introduced: the Market Portfolio Theory (MPT), which contends that investors can outperform the market by reducing certain kinds of risks by combining a mix of risky stocks based on their relationships to each other; and the Capital-Asset Pricing Model (CAPM) which asserts that there is no benefit to having a portfolio that contains risks that could otherwise be diversified away. CAPM advocates portfolios that have high betas in order to outperform the market. Despite the various market theories the book reiterates Warren Buffet's belief that most people should invest in a low cost market index fund that tracks the S&P 500 because most mutual funds have not and do not outperform the market over the long term.

The book introduces and highlights five (5) great investors and five (5) great traders. The investors are: Warren Buffet, Jack Bogle, Peter Lynch, William O'Neil, and Jim Cramer, and the traders are: George Soros, Jim Rogers, Paul Tudor Jones II, Martin S. Schwartz, and Linda Bradford Raschke. The author shares his rules for trading stocks and options which he calls the Small Black Pilot Fish Trading Strategy. You learn of his results and mistakes and a list of great financial books for study.

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