

Ben A. Plotkin

Mr. Plotkin joined Ryan Beck as an investment banker in 1987. Since joining Ryan Beck, he has been responsible for managing numerous offerings of equity and debt securities for financial institutions. Mr. Plotkin serves as a financial advisor to many financial institutions regarding mergers and acquisitions.

During his 10 year tenure as CEO at Ryan Beck, Mr. Plotkin took the firm private. In addition, he diversified and grew the firm's revenues. At the end of 2006, Ryan Beck had over 1000 employees and annual revenues of approximately \$250 million. For over 60 years, Ryan Beck focused on retail securities brokerage, capital market activities and investment banking services for financial institutions.

In early 2007, Mr. Plotkin announced the merger of two strong regional broker-dealers, Ryan Beck and Stifel Nicolaus, resulting in one of the largest national broker-dealers and advisory firms. Mr. Plotkin serves as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Stifel Financial Corporation, the NYSE listed parent of Stifel Nicolaus (symbol:SF). He also serves as Executive Vice President and a senior investment banker of Stifel Nicolaus. At present, Stifel has a market capitalization of \$1.3 billion and approximately 4000 employees.

Prior to joining Ryan Beck, Mr. Plotkin was a senior executive and board member of a thrift holding company. As an attorney, he was formerly associated with a Washington, D.C. law firm. In his practice, he specialized in financial institution matters including public offerings and acquisitions.

Mr. Plotkin received his Undergraduate Degree from the University of Florida. He holds a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center.

He has served on the Board of Securities Industry Association, the Young Presidents Organization and BankAtlantic Bancorp.