**TM\_EP\_50\_Malcolm Ethridge**

[00:00:00] **Voice Over** Welcome to the Tech Money Podcast, where the worlds of technology and personal finance collide, hosted by certified financial planner, speaker, blogger, and self-proclaimed personal finance nerd, Malcolm Ethridge. Each episode aims to make you just a little bit smarter about your money, all from the perspective of a tech professional without further delay.

[00:00:28] **Voice Over:** Here's your host.

[00:00:35] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Hey, there listeners. Malcolm here and on today's show, we're talking equity compensation. More specifically, we're talking about restricted stock units and the importance of creating a plan for what to do with your shares. Prior to the investing, I recently completed and published the Tech Money Guide to Restricted Stock Units, which by the way, is available for download at the Tech Money Home.

[00:00:57] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And it's a guide designed to answer a lot of the more common questions that I receive personally, and also see floating out there on the various social media channels that receive some, let's say, questionable answers sometimes. So, the guide is not meant to serve as a be-all, end-all on the subject. I encourage people to do their own research specific to their individual.

[00:01:19] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Circumstances, but it is meant to offer some guidance and rules of thumb types of answers that are not easily Googleable. That is, we went deeper than the surface level to provide [00:01:30] readers with a set of rules. They can't get anywhere else. So that's what we'll be doing today. My producer, Aric, here in the virtual studio, has a copy of the guide in front of him.

[00:01:40] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And I asked him to hit me with his best questions and I'll do my best to answer them in layman's terms. So that folks can understand. So, on that note, Aric, my good man. Let's get to it.

[00:01:52] **Aric Johnson:** All right. Well, first of all, I appreciate you bringing me in to do this because I have no clue what this is all about. You could not have picked a better person to have no clue what this guy is about than me. So

[00:02:03] **Malcolm Ethridge:** you say that, but you've been here for so many of these guests who I've talked equity with. I'm sure you could probably answer 25% of these questions yourself.

[00:02:13] **Aric Johnson:** Oh, you're so kind. Okay, Let's just start off with the baseline then. Why don't you tell us why you wrote the guide, who it's for, and what it's for?

[00:02:23] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so essentially, it's for people who receive restricted stock units as part of their total compensation every year, right? That requires you to be constantly developing and revisiting your plan, as you'll know, and to receive additional shares each year.

[00:02:39] **Malcolm Ethridge:** It's also written specifically for folks who work for publicly traded companies. That's important to note because those are treated differently. Restricted stock from privately held companies, but we will be making a revised version for folks who work for startups. But since the majority of people working in tech have RSU, we started there. [00:03:00]

[00:03:00] **Aric Johnson:** Okay, that's fair enough. So, what is a restricted stock unit and how does it work?

[00:03:06] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so the short of, it is a type of compensation that a company provides to its employees in lieu of traditional wages, like a salary or bonus, right? So, people typically conflate the word restricted stock with stock options.

[00:03:23] **Malcolm Ethridge:** It's a little bit different from stock options, though, because stock options give employees the right to purchase shares at a set price, whereas RSUs are actual shares of stock that are awarded to employees on a specific date.

[00:03:37] **Aric Johnson:** OK, all right. So that is quite a bit different. Now, just because I've been with you for so long, I kind of know the answer to this next question. I'm going to be kind of asking, but I want you to expand on it for myself and also for the rest of the audience. Why is it important to own equity in the company that you work for?

[00:03:53] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so, it's really important because it's, one thing to watch the company work for, exceeded sales targets and grow its revenue year after year and have the big party on, CNBC.

[00:04:04] **Malcolm Ethridge:** When they go to ring the bell, if your company goes public, and all those kinds of things, they're based partly on your efforts. Right. And then it's different to also participate in that party. Right. Everyone's being rewarded financially for their contributions to the overall success.

[00:04:21] **Malcolm Ethridge:** That's a totally different scenario. And so, this arrangement aligns your interests with those of the company because you want the company to [00:04:30] succeed because your equity, your stake in the company, will increase in value every time that it does. And so, owning equity in your employer just offers you an opportunity to build long-term wealth for yourself.

[00:04:40] **Malcolm Ethridge:** If done right, you know, doesn't guarantee you any future financial success, but reading this guide, hint, hint, and making smart decisions early on can help make a big difference in how much of an impact your equity has on your overall net worth down the line.

[00:04:57] **Aric Johnson:** Yeah, absolutely. I like the subtlety at the end there. That was perfect. Well, let me ask you this, because that, I mean, it sounds great, but are there any disadvantages to being paid this way?

[00:05:07] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, there certainly are. I mean, you could own similar to owning stock in anything else. Whether you work for the company or not, it could be worthless tomorrow. and that's the risk you take.

[00:05:17] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so, there are some companies where equity is like a huge, dangerously high percentage of people's income. But for most people, like Twitter is one that I know for a fact, like the majority of employees, something like 50% of their total comp comes from equity each year. That's a little high.

[00:05:40] **Malcolm Ethridge:** I think a lot of times, somewhere around that 25, 30% mark is where people tend to hang and then, you know, you go higher up the food chain to the executive ranks, and they include something called performance shares that increases that percentage a little bit. But the importance of owning equity is also a double-edged sword that cuts the other way [00:06:00].

[00:06:00] **Malcolm Ethridge:** right? So, if you decide to take a portion of your income in the form of stock, it means you're at the mercy of the stock market. You're at the mercy of the performance of the company that you work for and so forth and so on. And so, I'm jumping ahead a little bit, but one of the key tenants in this guide is also helping you devise a plan for when to sell.

[00:06:22] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So that you actually have something to show for all of that hard work, down the line and not get left, holding the bag on, stock. That's not worth nearly as much as it was when you received it, or not worth nearly as much as it was when you took the job, those kinds of things.

[00:06:41] **Aric Johnson:** Well, I think your Twitter example's perfect because not only are you at the mercy of what Twitter's doing, but also Elon in a lot of cases, right?

[00:06:49] **Malcolm Ethridge:** I mean, that's a whole other ballgame, but I think you're right. It's the perfect example. Like you have zero control over what Elon Musk is going to tweet tomorrow, but he has a lot of control over what your shares will be worth tomorrow. And so, you know, the recent market. Fluctuation is the word I'll use, have kind of driven people to become a little bit obsessed with and a little bit afraid of what's going to happen in relation to their equity, because, you know, in 2020 and 2021, I couldn't get very many of our clients to sell any of the shares in the company that they work for, because it's just like a rocket ship to the moon [00:07:30] and it just keeps going up until the right and better days are ahead.

[00:07:33] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And folks are like, "You're crazy. If you think I'm going to sell any of this, and now we find ourselves in what I consider to be more of a normal market cycle where everybody's like, "Oh crap. I've got to figure out what to do with these shares. I can't just continue to let it ride because that next role might not be the one.

[00:07:50] **Malcolm Ethridge**: And so that's also part of the reason that I wanted to create this and put it out there is to help people learn how to actually incorporate those shares into their overall financial plan and have a plan for what to do with those shares well in advance of when they actually

[00:08:07] **Aric Johnson:** Tell me something that people often overlook about their restricted stock units.

[00:08:13] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So, a common one, I think, is the remaining value of the shares that they still hold. So, if you, the forfeiture value is the word I was searching for. So, a lot of job switching happening right now has been happening in the last two years or whatever inside of COVID. Right. And in doing so, a lot of times you'll leave on the table.

[00:08:37] **Malcolm Ethridge:** You have unvested shares. So, if you work for a company that has a four-year vesting timetable to get all of your shares, you've been there for like a year and a half. That means you've got two and a half years’ worth of shares that haven't been vested yet. That has some value to it. Yeah, and so when considering whether it makes sense to jump to the next opportunity.

[00:08:57] **Malcolm Ethridge:** because the salary they're offering is a little bit higher. [00:09:00] The days off are a little bit, you know, you've got a few more days off or whatever. It's also important to factor into that calculation. What you're leaving on the table in the form of unvested chairs and the forfeiture value of those unvested shares

[00:09:16] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Because sometimes it's the case that if you just waited another month, two months, whatever, there's a significant piece that comes available that you now get to walk away with, instead of forfeiting it. I don't think people necessarily factor all the way into the conversation. And then also, some companies will offer what's known as a buyout grant.

[00:09:36] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Where they agree to buy out a candidate’s unvested RSU as part of their offer. Some companies don't offer this, but some do. And so, it's important just to be well informed when negotiating a compensation package with a potential new employer. But one of the ways that you start to be informed about that is by even knowing what your share's forfeiture value is in the first place.

[00:09:59] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Another plug here. You mentioned my subtlety. There is actually an example in the guide that shows people how to calculate that forfeiture value. It's very simple, but that's important. That's an important number to know.

[00:10:13] **Aric Johnson:** Yeah, what other common mistakes do people need to be aware of in this situation?

[00:10:19] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So, a common one, I think, is the remaining value of the shares that they still hold. So, if you, the forfeiture value is the word I was searching for. So, a lot of job switching happening right now has been happening in the last two years or whatever inside of COVID. Right. And in doing so, a lot of times you'll leave it on the table.

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[00:10:19] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so, another very common one is misreporting transactions, like if you're to sell a share. Misreporting the sale transaction and you [00:10:30] end up being double tax, right? There's again an example of this in the guide. So that folks who are visual learners can see exactly what I'm talking about, but essentially, if you sell shares, you get 1099 from your employer.

[00:10:42] **Malcolm Ethridge:** 1099 is pretty much blank. It reports only the information that they are legally required to report, which is very Spartan. And then it's up to you to actually file the corresponding tax forms to make sure that it gets recorded properly. It's not a common thing that people talk about all that much.

[00:11:03] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Like if I was to say to you, like, you got to make sure you file a form 89, 49 to reconcile what was reported on your 1099 B with the accurate cost basis from your records. You're going to be like, "What the hell are you talking about, Malcolm?" But that is something. If you are a person who prepares your own taxes, you need to be very much aware of it because it's a very common thing that when we bring in a new client, we review the last couple of years of all of our new clients' tax returns.

[00:11:30] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And one of the things that we're looking for is, did you appropriately reconcile the number of shares you sold with the taxes you had withheld your basis in those shares? And I'd say one out every two times. Somebody has been double taxed because they just took the information from 1099. They didn't go any further than that, because they probably didn't know to.

[00:11:51] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And there, there it is. And one of the things that folks are always asking is, like, how can I make sure that I'm not paying the IRS too much? Or how can I [00:12:00] reduce the amount that I'm paying in taxes every year? Well, this is one of the things. If you know what to be looking for, you can make sure that you're not accidentally, uh, getting double taxed on those shares whenever you do.

[00:12:13] **Aric Johnson:** Yeah, well, you can't blame me because you're the one that opened up the tax can of worms here. So, I got to follow up. I know that it's a big part of what people need to know about managing their shares. What else should people know about taxes when it comes to their RSU?

[00:12:29] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so another really big one is the automatic withholding rules that tend to confuse people a bit, right?

[00:12:34] **Malcolm Ethridge:** The mistake they make is not selling enough shares to cover the difference between their marginal tax rate and the 22% automatic withholding rate. And I'm talking about a lot of math on a podcast. I recognize that. So, I'm trying to kind of hold it back and simplify it as much as I can, but basically what I'm describing is the reason that a lot of folks who are paid in RSU tend to end up with a surprise tax bill every year in April.

[00:13:01] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Right. And I'm using surprise in air quotes and facetious because if it happens every year in April, it can't really be that much of a surprise, but it keeps growing and growing. And that's the part that surprises people because currently the federal, Supplemental wage rate as they call it.

[00:13:17] **Malcolm Ethridge**: It's 22%, but most people who listen to this podcast and are clients of mine, the financial planning firm that I work at, and anywhere else are not in that bracket. They're in [00:13:30] one of the ones above it, 24, 30, 35, 37. And that difference in what you're having automatically withheld from your shares of that vest and what you're due to pay the IRS

[00:13:41] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Income tax at the end of the year is what's creating that surprise tax bill for most people. And so, one of the key tenants in this guide is helping people understand and distill down to the number of shares that they need to be selling on an annual basis by the end of the year to cover that difference in taxes from what was automatically withheld by your employer.

[00:14:07] **Malcolm Ethridge:** and then what you actually owe because your own marginal tax rate is higher than that automatic withholding rate. And so that's another one of those. That's a very common and very big problem. I included this, I mean, it's an entire page and a half. I think the guide specifically focused on this to help people understand how to square that calculation and make sure that they're not ending up surprised like once the year is out.

[00:14:36] **Aric Johnson:** Yeah. Well, that leads me to just remember the number of times that you've spoken about shares specifically on the show. And you've said it's not a good idea to hold onto all your shares. And it's not necessarily a good idea to sell all your shares either.

[00:14:52] **Aric Johnson:** Obviously. How do you find the happy medium? How do you know where that is?

[00:14:57] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, I told you you've been listening to me.

[00:15:00] **Aric Johnson:** Oh yeah! I learned and I love it.

**Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, it depends, is the answer. And I know that answer drives people crazy, but the reality is that's the answer. It depends like the most conservative thing to do is sell them

[00:15:12] **Malcolm Ethridge:** as soon as they vest and take that bird in the hand and know exactly what you're going to get. But most people, especially, not most people who consume content through podcasts, right? I'm going to assume they ski a little bit younger. They're just not that conservative. Especially folks who work in tech. Folks who work in tech are usually pretty risky.

[00:15:30] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so, I always encourage folks to at least enough shares to cover that, that tax gap that I just mentioned from your, from the automatic withholding to your own marginal rate. But in addition, it helps to also make sure you're not paying more in taxes on shares that are, no longer worth as much as they were when they vested.

[00:15:50] **Malcolm Ethridge**: I'm glad you brought that up because you just made me backtrack on something else. I was thinking about another thing that's not Googleable. And I take pride in that because I like that this thing goes a little bit deeper than just Googling and seeing, you know, what everybody else is saying. But one of the things that people are realizing now, and realized in 2021, is that it's actually possible to lose money on RSUs if they vest, and then you don't have the appropriate amount of taxes withheld because you didn't sell any shares.

[00:16:22] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So, then you turned around and paid the taxes for those shares, using cash out of your pocket to pay the IRS. You're now [00:16:30] holding shares that are worth less than they were at the time their fair market value was recorded and you paid taxes. So, you actually lost money because you paid more in taxes than the shares were actually worth.

[00:16:42] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So that's another little nugget that I wanted to make sure that I remembered to get in there. So, now I'll answer the question that you were asking, and the reason it depends. Because you and I don't live the same life. right? Like, you are a little bit further along in that your daughter is a grown adult.

[00:17:01] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Who's financially responsible for herself, right? I'm going to correct it. Throw your personal situation out there and match it against mine. My daughter, on the other hand, is a tiny little person who doesn't have a job and is learning how to read. right? And so, I'm still very much financially responsible for her.

[00:17:17] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So, it's important to me to put money away to save for her college education. That may not be of interest to you, right? Your daughter's already a grown adult person and you might say it's important to me to put enough money away to help my daughter buy her first house. Right. It's something that I know is important to you.

[00:17:36] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Whereas I might say, "Forget her, she's on her own," by the time I've paid for college and everything else, she'd better be able to afford her own house. And, and she's her own financial backer at that point, right? And so, your needs are different from my needs, but the way that I square this is to tell people, to actually sit down and write out what their financial priorities are and then [00:18:00] assign a dollar figure.

[00:18:01] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Right. So, I have in the guide a few generic questions that are a little bit broader and cover a lot of people, like: have you already saved a significant cushion for an emergency? That applies to most people, right? That's a box. You want to check? Am I on pace to contribute the maximum allowable to any of my tax advantage accounts that I participate in at my employer, like a 401k or HSA or ESPP, all those kinds of things?

[00:18:28] **Malcolm Ethridge:** That applies to most people who work in tech. Do I have any financial goals that are non-negotiable, like saving for retirement, sending my child to college, or making a major purchase? It's kind of broad and applies to a lot of people, but once you've answered these questions for yourself, you want to assign a dollar figure to them because that will also tell you the corresponding number of shares.

[00:18:49] **Malcolm Ethridge:** You need to sell to fund those goals each year and check that box to make sure that thing actually gets done. Right. So, if I'm saying to you, it's important to me to send my kid to, college debt free. Right. And I know that the average college education outside of a state school is something like $40,000.

[00:19:12] **Malcolm Ethridge:** I say, I'm just throwing a number out there. And so, four years at $40,000 is going to be $160,000 that I need to have saved in today's dollars. So now I'm going to inflate that a little bit and say it's $200,000 by the time my kid gets there and it's time for her to go off to school. right? Yeah, so if I'm now trying to save [00:19:30] $200,000 over the next 10 years, then I know I need to be selling $20,000 worth of shares every single year to fund that goal.

[00:19:38] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Well, now I've identified the goal. I've assigned a dollar value to it, and I just have to now figure it out every single year. I guess each quarter or semi-annually whenever those shares vest, how many shares do I need to be selling at each interval to fund that 529 plan or wherever I'm saving for college to make sure that that box gets checked and that goal gets accomplished with the remainder of the shares.

[00:20:02] **Malcolm Ethridge:** I don't have a reason to be selling because I don't have any other financial goals I'm trying to solve. And so those out will allow to continue to accumulate in my brokerage account. and, hopefully, continue to grow in the market. Presumably, they grow over time. I'll allow those shares to continue to grow until I have some other cash needs, but now I've identified and created for myself a plan for how and when to sell shares.

[00:20:28] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Right. I got to cover my taxes. I'm going to contribute to the 529 and everything else. I'm just going to continue to let it.

[00:20:36] **Aric Johnson:** Okay, well, that's interesting because I've heard you say many, many times that receiving equity as part of your comp is a way to build wealth long term. So now we have to strike that balance, right? Is there a specific dollar amount or number of shares that you shouldn't sell beyond, or else you're kind of shooting yourself in the foot?

[00:20:55] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yes. So, it depends.

[00:21:00] **Aric Johnson:** There we go.

**Malcolm Ethridge:** Well, as much as I hate giving that answer to people, the reality is that it really just depends. But the reason I say that again is because I have worked with people that have said I'm not going to sell below half of the number of shares that I have no matter what. It's important to me to build a stake in Apple.

[00:21:19] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Let's say, as an example, in my portfolio, I want to own Apple stock for the rest of my life. So, it's important to me that I don't sell more than half of my Apple shares as a way to do that. Okay, if that's what your plan is, we'll figure out a way to work around it, right? Or you might be a person who says, "I want to own all of them forever."

[00:21:39] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Because I believe this company, over the next 30 years, is going to be the next Amazon. I'm just throwing an example out there. And so, I want to own as many shares of Amazon as possible. Well, just be aware of the trade-off you're making right now. You're pulling cash out of your pocket to pay taxes. You're pulling cash out of your pocket to fund all those other financial goals that you know, you've thrown out there and identified and I've assigned a dollar value to.

[00:22:03] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so now it's up to you. the financial risk of whatever that does turn out to be or not be. And so, the way I always answer this question to people is that you want to make sure that the number of shares you're hanging onto is not enough to wreck your financial situation, so you want to take on enough financial risk in owning these shares. [00:22:30]

[00:22:30] **Malcolm Ethridge:** If it were to evaporate tomorrow and go to zero, it's not going to derail your ability to do all the other things that are on your list of financial priorities. If that is the case, then we need to dial it back. right? Like if you are so fortunate that you've got enough in cash in the bank or your investment portfolio or whatever, that these shares go into zero tomorrow, won't change a thing.

[00:22:56] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Boom. There you go. There's your answer. Yeah, like there's nothing else for me to say, but then since that's not most people, it's important to just like understand the trade-off that you're making by saying. I'm going to hang onto these shares. right? Because if the example I use all the time is that if your boss were to hand you $250,000 in cash today, you're not going to log into your brokerage account and use it to buy $250,000 worth of Apple stock.

[00:23:24] **Malcolm Ethridge:** If you're an Apple employee, right? You're just not going to do it. People don't work that way, but by deciding not to sell anything and staying fully invested after they vest, you're basically making that decision, whether consciously or unconsciously. right? So, you do want to have some balance in there where you identify what you're using the shares to do, but there's also no right answer.

[00:23:45] **Malcolm Ethridge:** As far as what's the number to sell all the way down to, it's really a personal preference and a personal belief and all that kind of stuff.

[00:23:56] **Aric Johnson:** Well, I could be wrong, but I think that this message would've been great for Enron. [00:24:00]

[00:24:01] **Malcolm Ethridge:** I mean, Enron folks are what I'm basing this on. Right. Or not even like, Enron's kind of an extreme example. It's a little bit outdated. And so, when we say it, people younger than you and I might even be like, "What the hell do you call me old? Seriously, I'm calling us both old. Okay, but like, I'm looking at what happened in 2021 with a lot of companies that were companies that had inflated values just because that's where the market was at the time.

[00:24:30] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so, because the shares were valued at $500 a share at the time, everybody was excited, and we loved it. And we look at that and we're starting to make our life plans around that coin base. A really good example of this comes to mind as the share value was basically tied to, we now know, the price of those shares was directly tied to the market for crypto.

[00:24:56] **Malcolm Ethridge:** So as soon as the market for crypto starts to cool, all of a sudden, there goes the value of shares in Coinbase, but for a moment, Coinbase feels great, looks great, and is going to the moon. And we're not really thinking about the opposite side. The fact that this sword cuts both ways and could crush us if we're making financial plans based around the share price of a company as volatile as Coinbase is because it's tied to something as volatile as crypto is.

[00:25:23] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so, I say that to say, Iran, we all want to look at it and say, that's an outlier. [00:25:30] It's a once-in-a-lifetime kind of thing. It won't ever happen again. Well then, how do you explain Lehman Brothers? Yeah, and then if you tell me Lehman Brothers was also an outlier and a once-in-a-lifetime thing, I'll ask you.

[00:25:40] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Well, how do you explain Coinbase? And if you tell me Coinbase was a once-in-a-lifetime thing, I'll ask you, how do you explain Robinhood? which had a similar trajectory to what I just explained. and so forth and so on. And so, the point of this is just that these things will continue to happen. So it's just really important to make sure that you set a plan well in advance of when these things, when these shares are going to vest and become available to you so that no matter what happens through the course of the year, you're able to take the emotions out of your decision-making a little  are executive-level

[00:26:08] **Malcolm Ethridge:** right? If we pre-planned it like for our clients who are executive-level folks who are privy to non-public information, they're on a prescriptive selling plan, a 10 B-five-one plan. That designs exactly when they're going to sell well ahead of time.

[00:26:29] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And there's no emotion in it whatsoever, because they can't. And this also allows folks who don't have those same restrictions but want to have a similar outcome to create a plan for themselves to remove the emotion from it. so that no matter what happens from point to point in the market, you've got something to show for all of your hard work.

[00:26:48] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And you're also able to help, like, save yourself from yourself, take the human out of it, is the way that I like to say it.

[00:26:54] **Aric Johnson:** Yeah, absolutely. All right. Well, before we wrap up, I mean, we're getting close to the end of the podcast here. [00:27:00] What is your main message to listeners who are paid via RSU? And what's the big takeaway here?

[00:27:08] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so I've been kind of harping on it. I feel like I might be beating a dead horse to this point, but if folks have listened to this point in the episode, then it means they want to hear what I have to say about it. The thing I would just reiterate or say differently is that in my experience, in my day job of working with folks who work in tech and receive restricted stock as part of their total comp, the folks who actually execute on the plan.

[00:27:36] **Malcolm Ethridge:** They are the people who are most satisfied when it comes to having those shares or earning those shares. The people who actually do something with them when they vest are the people who are actually the most satisfied with everything. Really, I was going to try and identify a specific thing. Everything, they're just happier about their shares.

[00:27:56] **Malcolm Ethridge:** They're happier about their financial plan. They're happier with their situation with their employer, their compensation package, all those kinds of things because they're not just watching numbers accumulate on the page for the sake of getting larger. They're actually using those dollars to execute a vision, and that's what really matters.

[00:28:16] **Malcolm Ethridge:** And so, people are just a lot more satisfied when they put a plan in place and then execute on that plan.

[00:28:25] **Aric Johnson:** All right. Fair enough. I mean, that sounds great. Malcolm. Where can they get the guide? I [00:28:30] I'm going to do a call-to-action hero as I do this close, but they need the guide. Where do they get it?

[00:28:34] **Malcolm Ethridge:** Yeah, so, we'll make sure that we have a copy of it, a link to it in the show notes, for sure. Also, just the tech money homepage, tech-money.com. It's the very first thing at the top of the homepage now that folks can click into and download it as well.

[00:28:50] **Aric Johnson:** All right. Sounds good. Let's get back on track. Let's get some guesses in here. People don't want to hear me. All right. Let's do this.

[00:28:56] **Malcolm Ethridge:** You say that, but you've got like that perfect broadcaster voice that, you know, you could be selling, I don't know, Toyota Camrys or something like that in the middle of football games.

[00:29:08] **Aric Johnson:** I don't know if that's a compliment or non-Toyota Camrys. Couldn't have gone with something more luxurious, whatever.

[00:29:14] **Aric Johnson:** Anyway, Malcolm. Thank you for your time, man. Thank you for letting me be a part of this because I do learn. I do listen and, and this is, this has been a lot of fun and of course, our last thing always goes to you. Listening audience, thank you so much for tuning in and listening to the Tech Money podcast with Malcolm Ethridge.

[00:29:27] **Aric Johnson:** If you have not subscribed to the podcast yet, please click the "subscribe now" button below. This way, when Malcolm comes out with a new podcast, it'll show up directly on your listing device. We humbly ask that you share this podcast and leave a review, as this does actually help other people find the show. You can connect with Malcolm on social @MalcolmOnMoney.

[00:29:44] **Aric Johnson:** We'd love to hear from you and answer any questions you have, and you can do so by emailing them to podcast@techmoney.com. Thanks again for listening today to everyone at Tech Money. Our hope is that this show helps make you a little smarter about your money.

[00:29:59] **Voice Over** This has been the tech money podcast for more information on today's topic.

[00:30:04] **Voice Over** To review the show notes or to catch up on past episodes, be sure to check out MalcolmEthridge.com/podcast. And if you have an idea for a show topic that you'd like us to cover, or you want to send us feedback, the web address again is Malcolm Ethridge.com. You can also find Malcolm across all social media platforms @MalcolmOnMoney

[00:30:26] **Voice Over** This episode was written and created by Malcolm Ethridge with the production, the editing, and sound controls powered by Proud Mouth. This has been a Malcolm on Money original. Thank you for listening.

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[00:30:59] **Voice Over** It is always recommended that you seek the advice of your financial advisor or other qualified financial service providers with any questions you may have regarding your personal financial situation.