



## **A Heartfelt Farewell to Our Colleague and Dear Friend, Dan Fitzgerald**

On Tuesday November 17th, Dan Fitzgerald was tragically and suddenly taken from the earth to be with the Lord. Those who knew him and loved him remain earthbound with great sorrow.

Dan's associates at ThinkGen, and throughout the Pharmaceutical Marketing Research Industry where he spent most of his professional life, will remember him as the ideal blend of "cool" and "warm."

One of Dan's greatest strengths was his ability to remain cool under fire. Doubtless at least partially a result of his early stint as a Philadelphia Police Officer, he never panicked or ran from a problem. Just as patrolmen are trained to "Run to the sound of gunfire," Dan would seek out a problem that was brewing and throw his whole being into methodically solving it. In fact, Dan was known for practicing the Tom Peters style of "Managing by walking around." At V2 and later GfK US Health Care, Dan would prowl the halls, stopping to talk with everybody he met along the way. Even at a virtual company like ThinkGen, Dan's ability to keep in close touch with the troops often let him start to deal with a problem before the gunfire even erupted.

Dealing with entrepreneurs throughout much of his career, Dan's levelheadedness often served to keep them out of trouble. Although he was sometimes referred to jokingly as the "sales prevention department,"

his calm demeanor often helped to keep his adventurous colleagues from making significant business errors.

But then there was the warmth. While many of us have known Dan for decades, none of us can recall ever meeting anyone who did not have a soft spot in their heart for him. His genuine smile and his unique laugh would light up any room he entered.

Just so, everyone knew that whatever the circumstances, Dan would always have their backs. He spontaneously took personal responsibility for caring for his colleagues, making sure that everyone got a "fair shake." Perhaps the most amazing thing about the way he did this was the fact that in many cases, those who he was watching over so closely didn't even recognize just how hard he was working to protect their interests.

At the end of the day, Dan just cared about people and people cared about him. If there is any solace in all of this, it can be found in the pictures that he incessantly posted on Facebook, him smiling broadly with his children and grandchildren, who in turn were smiling right back at him with love in their eyes. Consolation can also be found in the fact that his loving wife Nancy was with him at the end.

Dan's life, though tragically cut off way too soon, was filled with love.

God's speed dear friend. See you on the other side.

*Written by Dr. Richard Vanderveer*