

Alvin Hall

Presenter and Narrator

“BBC Social Entrepreneurs” (working title)

Alvin Hall has been described as the last of his kind – a Wall Street financial expert and self-made businessman who didn't come from a privileged background but grew up dirt poor, one of seven children, in a family of farmers and fishers in rural Florida. “My mother was a day maid,” says Alvin. “She would drive 20 miles a day to a rich person's house and iron, clean and cook. My father died when I was 11. He was a cook.”

Alvin's first job was as a cleaner at a seafood restaurant. “I was 12 or 13 at the time,” says Alvin. “I worked there at weekends and after school for about two years. They paid me \$4 to \$5 an hour.”

Uniquely in his family and with almost no support, he achieved excellent grades, good enough to go to college. He was offered a place at Yale University, but chose to go to Bowdoin College in Maine, admitting that at that time “I had no idea what Yale was.” He studied literature, later taking an MA at the University of North Carolina.

After some time unemployed and working as a college professor teaching literature, he started to take an interest in finance. He began buying shares a little at a time. His personal investment strategy is based on simple, direct assessments: “My first share purchases were Microsoft, Intel and Dell. And I bought into them for the simple reason that I had a computer, and I really liked it. I thought that if someone like me was getting so much out of it – the really smart people were going to be able to do amazing things with them.” In early 2008, he sold his entire share portfolio – “I just had a gut feeling about the market” – but has begun trading again this year.

Alvin's ability to translate complex financial concepts into simple English led to him becoming director of course development at Leo Fleur, a company selling training materials for finance exams. “Working in Wall Street was the first time I had been around people with enormous wealth,” says Alvin, “and I was interested in how they made their money grow.”

He had a series of jobs in finance and educational companies, eventually becoming Executive Director of the New York Institute of Finance. He now runs his own company designing, developing and conducting customised seminars and classes about the investment markets for financial services firms and their staff, as well as for regulatory authorities in the US and abroad. He also writes training manuals about the financial markets for brokerage firms, investment banks and other financial institutions. He charges between \$10,000 and \$50,000 a day, depending on the course and the number of people involved.

His television career began when he was “discovered” by a BBC producer Jonathan Drori while visiting a London art gallery. Initially sceptical of television, he proved to be a natural. He now has extensive presenting, narrating and writing experience for both television and radio. He has made many appearances on topical and current

affairs programmes, and anchored the following series:

Alvin Hall's Guide to Successful Investing (3-part series, BBC2, 1997)

Investing for All with Alvin Hall (4-part series, BBC2, 1998)

Your Money or Your Life (5 series of 6 parts, BBC2, 1999 to 2003)

World's Most Powerful (3-part series, BBC2, 2003)

He is a regular on BBC Radio 4 and has written many columns and articles for the national press such as The Times, The Daily Mail, The Sun, The Mirror and The Scotsman. He's also written many books on financial and business matters, including:

Money For Life: Everyone's Guide to Financial Freedom (2000)

Winning With Shares: Investing wisely and profitably in the Stock Market (2001)

Your Money or Your Life (BBC) – A practical guide to solving your financial Problems and affording a life you'll love (2002)

What Not To Spend – Priceless Ways to manage your money (2004)

You & Your Money – Creating a Prosperous Relationship (2006)

Get Out of Debt with Alvin Hall (2006)

Climb The Property Ladder with Alvin Hall (2006)

Save and Invest with Alvin Hall (2006)

Show me the Money - Putting the fun into finance! (2008)

Alvin is also passionately interested in modern art, with his own extensive collection. He once spent \$65,000 on a single painting.

Business Career

Executive Director, New York Institute of Finance (1987-90)

Director of Marketing, Longman Financial Services Institute, Chicago (1986-87)

Director of Course Development, Leo Fleur Inc., New York (1982-86)

Promotions & Publications Manager, North Carolina Public Television (1980-82)

Showreel (prepared by agent)

www.take3management.co.uk/alvin_hall_showreel.htm