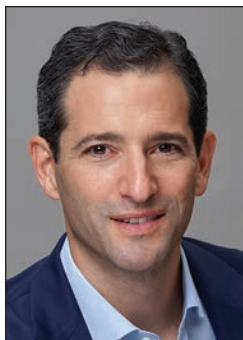


# The Power of Oppenheimer Thinking

An Interview with Robert Lowenthal, President, Oppenheimer Holdings Inc. and Oppenheimer & Co. Inc.

**EDITORS' NOTE** Rob Lowenthal is President of Oppenheimer Holdings Inc. as well as the firm's broker-dealer, Oppenheimer & Co. Inc. He has been a member of the firm's Board of Directors since May 2013 and provides strategic, financial reporting, enterprise, and operational risk management perspectives given his longstanding experience and direct connection to the businesses. He chairs the Executive Management Committee and Co-Chairs the Risk Management



Robert Lowenthal

Committee, where he drives the firm's agenda for growth, balanced with operational and financial risk. In addition, he serves as Head of Investment Banking, where he leads the division responsible for delivering capital raising and advisory services to privately held and publicly traded companies, investment funds, and government entities. Lowenthal joined the firm in 1999, and subsequently became Head of the Taxable Fixed Income business in 2007, and in 2012 assumed responsibility for all Global Fixed Income capabilities, including oversight of the Public Finance and Municipal Sales and Trading departments. He received his BSBA from Washington University in St. Louis and his MBA from Columbia Business School.

**FIRM BRIEF** Oppenheimer Holdings Inc. ([oppenheimer.com](http://oppenheimer.com)), through its operating subsidiaries, is a leading middle market investment bank and full-service broker-dealer that is engaged in a broad range of activities in the financial services industry, including retail securities brokerage, institutional sales and trading, investment banking (corporate and public finance), equity and fixed income research,

market-making, trust services, and investment advisory and asset management services. With roots tracing back to 1881, Oppenheimer is headquartered in New York and has 92 retail branch offices in the United States and institutional businesses located in London, Tel Aviv, and Hong Kong.

## Will you highlight the history of Oppenheimer and how the firm has evolved?

Oppenheimer has a long history of being independently owned and dedicated to the business of providing investment advice. From inception, the firm has distinguished itself from other investment firms through its original ideas and client service. This has always been driven by a corporate culture that rewards powerful thinking, teamwork and talented individuals. We are proud of our unique approach as it demonstrates our strength and stability.

From our beginning, the power, tradition, and excellence of our thinking has helped us travel in one direction – forward. Oppenheimer's bold and original thinking is the cornerstone of our consistency in delivering innovative ideas and customized solutions for our clients' success.

Our entrepreneurial spirit is in our DNA and traces its roots back to Harris C. Fahnstock, a successful investment banker and financial advisor to President Abraham Lincoln. He established Fahnstock & Co. in 1881 – the predecessor to Oppenheimer.

Despite significant economic challenges like the Great Depression, Fahnstock & Co. flourished – opening three offices and acquiring another firm in 1937. By the 1940s, it expanded overseas into post-war Europe and established

new branches in South America. Subsequently, during the severe bear market of the 1970s, it continued to focus on individual client success and, as a result, avoided being acquired or liquidated – unlike many brokerages.

In 2003, Fahnstock & Co. took on its current name: Oppenheimer & Co. Inc., when the firm acquired the Private Client and Asset Management divisions of CIBC's U.S. business. The combined businesses doubled the firm's assets under administration and greatly enhanced its product and service capabilities.

In early 2008, Oppenheimer acquired much of CIBC World Markets' U.S. capital markets business, expanding its institutional capabilities by adding significant resources to equity research, sales and trading, and its investment banking business, deepening our industry coverage and product teams.

In the wake of the Great Financial Crisis, the firm was well-positioned to onboard significant talent throughout its businesses. In particular, Oppenheimer added talented professionals across all cash bond asset classes in its Fixed Income division. The firm emerged from the crisis with a leading franchise in its Fixed Income business and now maintains a global footprint, covering over 3,000 institutions in over 30 countries.

We are inspired by our history, but we don't dwell there. Instead, we look to the future with continued investment in our talented people, technology, and a culture that constantly seeks to expand our offerings and services.

Today, we are committed to making our second century even stronger than our first by using The Power of Oppenheimer Thinking in Wealth Management, Capital Markets, and Investment Banking to help improve client outcomes and leave the world a better place.

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**How do you define Oppenheimer’s mission and purpose?**

Oppenheimer is a global financial institution offering wealth management, capital markets, and investment banking solutions. We have been providing customized solutions centered on the goals of our clients since 1881 – using our extensive experience, resources, research, and knowledge to help advance society and improve our communities.

Our vision is to help build and protect our clients’ financial future; our mission is to apply original thinking that anticipates and captures innovative investment opportunities that improve our clients’ outcomes.

**What have been the keys to Oppenheimer’s industry leadership and how do you describe the Oppenheimer difference?**

Oppenheimer’s leadership success stems from various factors. With a remarkable 140-year history, our adaptability, resilience, and forward-thinking approach have been key. We embody the disciplined thinking of investors, deeply engaged in studying capital markets, cycles, trends, and innovations, foreseeing their outcomes. Our unyielding commitment to our clients’ success underpins everything – we relentlessly prioritize their triumph, recognizing it as our own. This synergy sets us apart – the “Oppenheimer difference.” Our longevity, market acumen, and unwavering client focus culminate in a leadership style defined by foresight, dedication, and shared success.

**Will you highlight your role as president of Oppenheimer and how you focus your efforts?**

As the President of Oppenheimer, my journey has been one of evolving responsibility, guided by the trust of my father (Albert

“Bud” Lowenthal, Chairman & CEO of the firm), the board, and the entire company. My 24 years of experience at the firm has greatly informed my strategic intuition and prioritization of resources. In particular, I take great care in our development of human capital, recruitment of the experienced professionals who join our teams, and raise awareness to the many risks that could impact our firm and our clients. I spend significant time fostering collaboration across our many businesses, making sure we leverage our relationships and talented professionals to benefit our clients’ outcomes.

My efforts are channeled into four primary areas:

1. Clients: Engaging with our frontline producers and clients across our diverse businesses fuels my enthusiasm and connection to our purpose.

2. New Initiatives: I lead teams in shaping the direction of our most ambitious new projects, ranging from technology development, venture investing, branding, communications, selecting and developing new relationships with investment partners, and other initiatives that help drive our expansion.

3. Governance/Engagement: Ensuring the right governance structures are in place to monitor risk and that individuals are empowered and encouraged to contribute to our endeavors. I also believe that orchestrating transparent discussions is a priority, ensuring that we explore all angles of a topic before making decisions.

4. Talent: Nurturing relationships within our firm takes various forms, from informal outings and lunches to engaging with interns, analysts, and top producers. I relish understanding our teams and take pride in recruiting future talent. These explorations inevitably lead

to the surfacing of a client need and catalyze conversation and solutions.

**Where do you see the greatest opportunities for growth for Oppenheimer?**

At Oppenheimer, I envision a wealth of growth opportunities both within and across our principal businesses. These segments operate in synergy, often displaying counter-cyclical tendencies.

Our largest business and our crown jewel, Wealth Management, guides individuals and families to plan, invest, and transition their wealth. The demand for expert advice is at an all-time high, presenting a remarkable avenue for continued growth.

In Investment Banking, our strong foothold in the middle market space positions us as a dominant player. With a comprehensive range of services including capital raising, M&A and debt advisory, we’re poised to succeed in any market environment. However, our greatest opportunity to succeed aligns with the demand for capital and company formation in the public and private markets. Our expertise is most closely aligned with the innovation-driven growth economy, and we will benefit when that cohort of companies reemerges with greater investor interest.

Our Capital Markets arm, encompassing sales, trading, research, corporate access, and fixed income, remains at the forefront of our expansion efforts. The strategic addition of niche capabilities, such as our recent foray into the custody business, bolsters our ability to provide a full range of capabilities.

We operate in one of the most competitive sectors, of the most competitive industry, in the most competitive market (U.S.) in the world. What separates us is our people, culture, and client relationships. We are large enough to mobilize the same vast capabilities as our

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largest competitors, but we can do it with less bureaucracy, fewer distractions, and no commercial lending conflict. The potential for growth becomes even more apparent as we build on our successes and continue to invest in an exciting future.

**How important is brand awareness for Oppenheimer and how do you plan to continue to build brand recognition for the firm?**

Brand awareness holds immense significance for Oppenheimer, serving as a cornerstone of our strategy. A recent achievement I'm particularly proud of is our comprehensive brand reimagining endeavor. Being a heritage brand with a rich legacy, we embarked on a journey of engagement, gathering insights from our valued employees, advisors, and a diverse spectrum of institutional and wealth management clients.

The affirmation from these stakeholders has been truly heartening, underlining the depth of affection and esteem associated with Oppenheimer. Our research revealed a sentiment that resonates: “Those who know Oppenheimer, love Oppenheimer.” We recognize that maintaining a prominent presence in the minds of clients and prospects bolsters comprehension and consideration of our brand.

In this spirit, we've undertaken a contemporary brand evolution, harmonizing our storied history with the dynamic outlook that propels us forward. Our compelling tagline, “The Power of Oppenheimer Thinking,” emerged as a unifying theme, striking a chord across our diverse audience.

This fall, we launch our rejuvenated brand, an opportunity to introduce ourselves anew, epitomizing the fusion of our enduring legacy and our visionary aspirations. The journey towards sustained brand recognition remains a dynamic pursuit, rooted in a deep understanding of our stakeholders' needs and aspirations.

**How critical is it for Oppenheimer to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?**

As the President of Oppenheimer, I firmly assert that building a diverse and inclusive workforce is of paramount importance to our firm's sustained success. We recognize that diversity is not just a mere checkbox, but an indispensable factor in shaping an enduring financial institution. Our industry thrives on innovative perspectives and varied insights, necessitating a broad spectrum of talent. By fostering a diverse workforce, we fortify our ability to understand and cater to the multifaceted needs of our clients.

As the financial landscape evolves, our commitment to inclusivity ensures we remain relevant, resilient, and responsive to the dynamic challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

**What do you see as Oppenheimer's responsibility to be a good corporate citizen and engaged in the communities it serves?**

In the realm of our role as a prominent financial institution, I find it both gratifying and essential that Oppenheimer assumes the mantle of a responsible corporate citizen, deeply engaged with the communities it serves. This engagement, while diverse in its local manifestations, is united by a shared aspiration: addressing the unique needs of our communities. We firmly believe that our localized initiatives, driven by an intimate understanding of the prevailing challenges and opportunities, lay the foundation for positive impact.

Beyond this, our responsibility extends to a broader horizon of influence. By directing resources toward ideas and innovation, we not only fuel progress, but also contribute substantively to community betterment. Our firm's unwavering passion for technological innovation spanning sectors holds the promise of enhancing lives. Similarly, we are driven by the profound potential of transformative healthcare capabilities, recognizing the power they wield to elevate the human experience. Moreover, our desire for fostering sustainability within the energy domain reverberates with the promise of significant and far-reaching positive change.

Oppenheimer's responsibility as a conscientious corporate citizen extends beyond conventional boundaries. Our engagement moves outward from the local to the global, fueled by a visionary commitment to ideas, innovation, and societal well-being. As we navigate the currents of progress, we remain steadfast in our dedication to catalyzing positive transformation in the communities we serve.

**What do you feel are the keys to effective leadership and how do you describe your management style?**

The essence of effective leadership, in my view, lies in the art of assembling a proficient team and cultivating an environment conducive to their success. When seeking out talent, I place a premium on individuals who possess the remarkable ability to construct not only business ventures, but entire ecosystems. This elusive quality, akin to catching lightning in a bottle, is discernible through the fusion of determination and collaboration.

Regarding my approach to my management style, it can be likened to a strategic alliance with these visionary individuals. I extend to them a platform upon which to build their visions, and in turn, stand ready to engage with them on multiple levels. At times, I assume the role of a sounding board, facilitating the exchange of ideas. On other occasions, I serve as a confidant in moments of complex decision-making. The culmination of our shared efforts is embraced with the utmost enthusiasm and acknowledgment.

In summation, the tenets of leadership and management that I espouse are characterized by a fusion of calculated collaboration and ceremonial camaraderie. This approach, I believe, engenders an environment ripe for transformative accomplishments.

**You have been with Oppenheimer for more than 20 years. What has made the firm so special for you?**

I've had the privilege of being part of the Oppenheimer family for a span of 24 fulfilling years. Three distinct factors have contributed to this remarkable journey. First, it's the people – an incredible assembly bonded by shared values (which are Entrepreneurial, Bold Thinking, Relentlessly Client Centric, Responsive, and Family) and an unwavering commitment to constructive growth. Second, I've been fortunate to lead and develop various business divisions, from technology to fixed income and investment banking, and steer governance committees such as Risk Management and Management Committee. Last, the sense of family permeates through, encompassing not only my father, who's my mentor and a demanding boss, but also the firm itself.

**What advice do you offer to young people beginning their careers?**

I'd say, to begin with, welcome to an incredibly dynamic phase of your career journey. It's a thrilling time with fresh trends sparking innovation and unfolding new possibilities. We're just scratching the surface of what artificial intelligence will bring. Here's my counsel: keep that curiosity alive, develop a strong work ethic, and embrace openness, as you never know where paths will lead. Cultivate a robust network of peers and mentors – they're your support in both triumphs and trials. Prioritize your well-being, aim to make a positive impact, and never cease in your pursuit of happiness. Remember, you're shaping the future, so relish the ride. ●