

# The Deal

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## From Clinton to cleantech

by  
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**Timothy Newell**, a former technology adviser to President **Bill Clinton**, has joined Merriman Curhan Ford Group Inc. as head of a new cleantech strategy group. Newell, 48, will look for investment opportunities in cleantech for the San Francisco-based firm, which expects to raise several cleantech funds.

Newell was most recently a partner at DFJ Element, Draper Fisher Jurvetson's \$280 million cleantech affiliate fund. There he looked at a number of cleantech and biofuel deals alongside Merriman Curhan founder and CEO **Jon Merriman** and **Greg Curhan**, the firm's president and head of its cleantech investment banking group. "Last fall Greg and I started talking about the broader opportunities in capital markets, specifically in asset management, in the cleantech arena," says Newell. "Over the last five years, there has been a major shift of VC investments into cleantech companies, driven by powerful economic and regulatory trends. Those investments are really only the tip of the iceberg for the capital."

Newell, a graduate of Brown University, began as a legislative aid to Sen. **Patrick Leahy**. He then served as Washington staff director to then-Rep. **Norman Mineta**. From 1993 to 1997, Newell was the White House's deputy director for policy in the Office of Science and Technology Policy, where he worked with **Al Gore** on the Environmental Technology Initiative and the space program.

At the White House, Newell met Robertson Stephens founder **Sandy Robertson**, who, despite being a Republican, was a major Clinton supporter. "I worked with business leaders and got to know Sandy very well," says Newell. Earlier, Robertson had recruited **Bob Grady**—a member of President **George H.W. Bush's** administration and now the chairman of Carlyle Venture Partners—to Robertson Stephens and "thought he would try again with a Democrat," laughs Newell.

Newell left the White House to work for Robertson Stephens for two years and, in 1999, joined E\*Offering, the tech investment bank co-launched with E\*Trade Financial Corp., which was sold to Wit SoundView a year later. Before joining DFJ in 2004, he worked at Olympius Capital LP, a San Francisco-based private equity firm, as COO and, along with banker **Peter Liu**, co-launched New Resource Bank, a commercial bank that finances eco-conscious businesses.



Newell



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