



8 Questions to Ask Your Financial Advisor

Everyone wants to know, how should I pick a financial advisor? In the end, the decision is personal and you should not choose someone based off a checklist. However, below are some points you could consider as you evaluate an advisor. It is your money and your financial life, so be sure you are comfortable with (and understand!) their answers. Under each question, I've responded with the facts about my firm.

1. **Are you a fiduciary and where is that stated in writing?**

Yes, I am a fiduciary. This means I only make recommendations that are in my client's best interest. I have included this in all our contracts and am bound by law to honor it. Don't let an advisor tell you they are a fiduciary, but not put it in writing. The importance of this to you as the client cannot be understated. The result is, I may act differently than many financial professionals.

2. **How are you compensated?**

I am compensated exclusively by my clients. I do not get paid by any other company to sell their products or recommend their investment solutions. This allows me the freedom to help you in ways that others cannot. It also removes a conflict of interest that can arise when a financial advisor (or their company) is compensated in ways that conflict with your best interest.

3. **What are your fees?**

I charge an ongoing financial planning fee starting at \$200 per month. There are other services I can provide if your situation calls for them. If you also have investments you would like me to manage for you, the fee for that service starts at 0.8% of your account balances and reduces as the account grows. I believe that comprehensive planning is the core of my work with you and will guide us to effectively achieve your goals.

4. **Can you tell me about your conflicts of interest?**

In my Form ADV Part 2 I have full disclosure about the way I work and any conflicts between my interest and yours. This document is one you can get for all financial advisors and can be a very interesting read. For example, I will have more revenue if you decide you want me to manage your money. However, unlike other advisors, this is not a requirement to work with me. I don't have asset minimums. As always, my duty as a fiduciary is to only make recommendations that are in your best interest.



YOUR FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP

5. **Are your planning services limited or comprehensive?**

I provide comprehensive financial planning, looking at not just your investments, but your future goals, insurance, taxes, income, property, and how all of them can work together to get you where you need to go. I do also offer more limited (project) engagements to address smaller, specific areas of concern. You are the one who decides which services you need.

6. **Do you earn fees for referring me to other professionals?**

No, whenever I recommend you work with another professional, there is no money changing hands. For example, when I see you don't have a will or advanced health directives, I'll often recommend you use an online tool or see an estate planning attorney. I am always happy to work with your current CPA, attorney, or other professional as needed.

7. **What is your investment philosophy?**

I believe in investing in low-cost, diversified, market tracking securities. They also tend to be liquid and easy to understand. I am not trying to beat the market. I believe trying to do that is a losing proposition. Instead, I look to invest for you to obtain a reasonable trade off between risk and return. Your investments will be driven by the needs identified in your financial planning process.

8. **What professional credentials do you have?**

I am a Certified Financial Planner professional. This is often seen abbreviated as CFP®. There are more than 80,000 certificants in the United States. I earned my certification in 2005. To become a CFP it takes hundreds of hours of study, a six-hour exam, years of mentorship, as well as continuing education each year. I am also registered with the state as required by securities law. You can always find more information about an advisor, including any disciplinary background, using the brokercheck.finra.org website.

Understand your options

Hopefully these questions have helped you to better determine if a financial advisor is the right one for you. If you are interested in continuing the conversation, we offer a free 30-minute call with a Certified Financial Planner certificant. On that call, we can talk through your concerns, answer questions, and determine if we can help. Click on the link below to see our openings.

[Schedule a Conversation](#)