

What to Expect from your Financial Planner

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Expect them to act in your best interest

- They should be a fiduciary
- Not just a salesperson
- Why would “advisors” lobby against fiduciary status?
- What’s their educational background and experience
 - CFP?
 - CFA?

Expect them to tell you how they get paid

- Fees
- Commissions
- Any conflicts of interest?

Work with your attorney on estate planning

- Know how to review a trust
- Know how to designate beneficiaries
- Guide you on whether you should be making gifts to family members

Expect them to help you with tax planning

- CPA's are too busy around tax time
- Have year end tax planning meetings with your planner
 - Does a Roth conversion make sense?
 - What kind of IRA should you fund?
 - Are there losses to take in your investments?
 - Should you set up a retirement plan for your business?
 - What's the best way to make charitable contributions?

Expect them to help you plan for retirement

- Where should you save money?
 - IRA? 403b? Roth IRA?
- How much should you save
- How much do you need to live on?
- How much can you safely spend each year?
 - Where should the withdrawals come from?
- When should you take Social Security?



Expect them to help you make housing decisions

- Keep your house during retirement?
- Sell the house and rent or downsize?
- Take out a reverse mortgage?
 - Or maybe a home equity loan?

Expect them to manage your portfolio prudently

- Diversify the investments
- Keep costs down
- Manage tax liabilities
- Protect you from doing the wrong thing at the wrong time

Expect them to help after a spouse passes away

- Work with an estate planning attorney
- Work with the tax person
- “Quarterback” the financial advice team

Expect them to help you figure out insurance needs

- Do you need life insurance?
- Should you buy annuities?
- Should you surrender policies you already own?

Don't expect them to magically cut your tax bill

- Everyone wants to pay less, but can't always be done.
- It's not good to:
 - Take out a big mortgage
 - Buy bad investments for the tax write off
 - Give all the money to charity

Don't expect them to time the market

- Study after study shows it's not possible
- We try to tell clients we can't do it, but they still think we can

Don't expect them to magically cut spending

- Spenders have a hard time changing their stripes