

Questions to ask before choosing a financial planner



1. How are you paid? Is it by a fee and commission? Do you fully disclose the fees and the commissions you earn on every investment you make or service you offer? If paid by fees, what is the average fee your clients pay?
2. How many years have you been in the business? How long have you been a financial planner?
3. Can you give me some references of people you have worked with for more than two years?
4. What is your typical client like? Income levels, issues, investment amounts?
5. What training did you have to be a planner? What requirements were needed to attain this degree or title?
6. How many hours of continuing education must you have to keep your degree/designation?
7. What does a completed financial plan look like?
8. What is the most important difference your work made in someone's life?
9. How many clients do you have?
10. How many support staff do you have? What are their credentials?
11. Do you have a privacy statement? May I have a copy?
12. Is there an agreement among you and your staff to keep information confidential? Have there ever been any violations of that agreement?
13. Do you have a copy of your Form ADV (a required disclosure form from the securities authorities)? Have you been responsible for any securities violations?
14. Do you have a formal contract to define the responsibilities of the clients and those of the planners? Does it also address a protocol to settle differences and to terminate the relationship? How long does the contract last?

Answers you will get to these questions can vary suggests Lynn S. Evans, CFP, author of *Power of the Purse: Fear-Free Finances for Baby Boomer Women*. You may have other questions that are important to you. Examples include if the offices are nearby and if you can communicate by email).

A question regarding the planner's investment performance is absent. For good reason: the planner's average return on an investment is not the key to his or her success. The ability to meet the clients' goals is what really counts.



LOST WITHOUT CYBERSPACE?

What if you couldn't get a Wi-Fi signal on your smartphone?

How anxious would you be if you forgot your phone or lost it? Worry about not being able to see instant news and weather? Or freak about a low battery? If you say yes, you may be a nomophobe (that's having no mobile phone phobia), according to Iowa State University researchers, in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*.

Take the 20-question test and judge for yourself at www.news.iastate.edu/news/2015/08/26/nomophobia. It's not an addiction but an obsession, they say.