



**HIRING THE RIGHT
FINANCIAL ADVISOR:
10 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASK**

INTRODUCTION

When hiring a financial advisor, you're entering a long-term relationship with someone who will guide your financial future. To ensure a successful partnership, it's critical to ask the right questions and do your research. Below are key questions and factors to consider during the interview process to help you make an informed decision.

1. HOW ARE YOU COMPENSATED?

Fee Structure Transparency: Advisors can be compensated in different ways: commission-based, fee-based, or fee-only. Commission-based advisors may have an incentive to steer you toward certain products.

What to Look For: A fee-only advisor, who charges a percentage of assets under management, usually aligns better with your interests because they don't make extra money based on the products they recommend.

2. ARE YOU A FIDUCIARY?

Putting Your Interests First: A fiduciary is legally required to prioritize your financial well-being over their own. Working with a fiduciary ensures that their advice is based on what's best for you, not for them.

3. WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS?

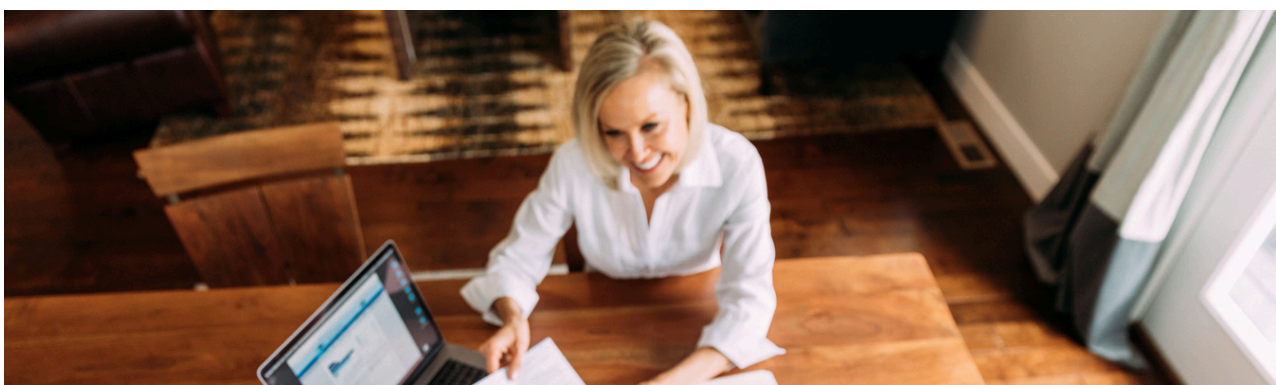
Professional Credentials: Look for designations like CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ (CFP®) or Chartered Financial Consultant® (ChFC®). These credentials indicate a high level of training and a commitment to ethical standards.

4. HOW OFTEN WILL WE COMMUNICATE?

Regular Check-ins: Your financial situation and goals will evolve, so regular communication is critical. Ask how frequently you'll meet or hear from the advisor, and if they'll explain decisions or changes in your investment strategy.

5. WHAT SAFEGUARDS ARE IN PLACE TO PROTECT ME?

Compliance & Regulation: Inquire about the advisor's firm's internal safeguards against fraud, and ask if the advisor has ever faced disciplinary action. Ensure they follow all legal and regulatory requirements to protect your assets.



6. WHAT IS YOUR INVESTMENT APPROACH?

Investment Strategy: Ask the advisor to explain their investment philosophy in simple terms. Make sure it aligns with your financial goals and risk tolerance.

Transparency: Will they provide you with detailed information on the investments they recommend? Make sure you'll have access to performance reports and insights.

7. WHO DO YOU TYPICALLY WORK WITH?

Client Profile: Understanding their typical client base will help you see if they're a good fit for your needs. Ask about the number of clients they take on each year to ensure they won't be spread too thin.

8. WHAT SERVICES WILL YOU PROVIDE?

Personalized Attention: Find out if you'll be working directly with the advisor or a team. Ensure the advisor can provide tailored services that fit your unique financial situation.

9. WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU RETIRE OR LEAVE?

Succession Planning: Ask what happens if the advisor retires, passes away, or leaves the firm. Will another advisor take over your account, and will they follow a similar investment strategy? Knowing this ensures continuity in managing your finances.

10. ARE THERE ANY RED FLAGS I SHOULD BE AWARE OF?

Watch Out for Scams: Be cautious if the advisor guarantees returns, pressures you to invest quickly, or promises high returns with no risk. These are signs of potential fraud. Also, be wary of advisors who appeal to personal or community affiliations to gain your trust.

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- **Do Your Homework:** Use resources like FINRA's BrokerCheck (<https://brokercheck.finra.org/>) to research an advisor's background, credentials, and any disciplinary history.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** While it's important to get along with your advisor, don't rely solely on a "gut feeling." Verify their qualifications, track record, and approach.

CONCLUSION

By asking these questions and looking out for these key factors, you can find an advisor who is the right fit for your financial goals. Taking the time to choose wisely will give you peace of mind as you plan for your future.



LETS WORK TOGETHER

Schedule Your 15 Minute Introductory Call with Hilltop Today!

Hilltop Wealth and Tax Solutions can help you create a comprehensive retirement plan tailored to your needs. Don't wait—ensure your retirement readiness now.

START THE CONVERSATION

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