



Why You Need an Adviser, and What to Look For

The world of finance is complex. In an era where the title 'Financial Adviser' is used loosely, the challenge is differentiating between clickbait and genuine expertise. Knowing where to go for good advice can feel tricky and hesitation can mean missing out on the long-term benefits of the right partnership... Especially for those with retirement planning front to mind. This guide clarifies the value of seeking professional help and outlines the key qualities and questions to ask when choosing a partner.

Do I need an Adviser?

A financial adviser serves as a versatile guide and coach, helping clients from all walks of life—whether nearing retirement, a high-net-worth individual, or an affluent young professional—to align their financial decisions with their ultimate life goals.

Financial planning is multi-faceted and involves continual fine-tuning. While you are likely retiring for the first time, an adviser has the fortunate experience of successfully retiring many. Their primary role is to identify and fill gaps in your comprehensive financial plan that could jeopardize your success. Successful wealth management goes far beyond simply knowing what to save. An adviser optimizes your entire financial landscape with specialized, "behind-the-scenes" strategies:

- **Retirement Income Strategies:** Devising the most tax-efficient way to draw income based on your investments, income sources (like Social Security and Required Minimum Distributions), and short-term needs.
- **Tax Planning:** Implementing proactive strategies to minimize your tax burden and avoid creating unintended tax liabilities.
- **Estate Execution:** Coordinating with attorneys on account titling and beneficiary updates. **This is critical**—creating the estate plan is only part of the marathon; not updating account ownership can lose you the race at the finish line.
- **Informed Decision Making:** Providing critical information to help clarify the difference between emotional reactions and informed, thought-out decisions.
- **Personalized Guidance:** Replacing generic, blanket advice from click-bait articles with counsel relevant only to your unique situation.

Even if you enjoy managing your own portfolio, your loved ones may not feel as comfortable. Engaging an adviser familiar with your situation is a great gift to your loved ones who may assume your role during an unexpected health event. Advisers help ensure every decision is made by you, removing the weight of financial management from your family's shoulders during a difficult time, especially when navigating life events like divorce, death of a loved one, inheritance, or large purchases. Once you realize you would benefit from hiring an adviser...

What do I Look for in a Financial Professional?

I would not hire someone that I wouldn't want to spend an hour chatting with— This is true in my personal and professional life. Find someone in tune with you that will represent you well. In the search for the right partner, it is important to consider factors beyond just investment selection. Start with what is most

important to you, considering specialization, credentials, and fee structure. A few things you may ask are,,,

Must-Ask Question	Why It Matters
Are you a Fiduciary?	A Fiduciary is held to the highest standard, legally and ethically required to put your best interest before their own.
How are you paid?	Determine if they are Fee-Only or earn commissions. Fee-Only advisors are motivated by your account performance, not by selling commission-driven products.
What is your approach to holistic planning?	Ensure they consider all areas of your life: insurance, estate planning, tax planning, and risk management—not just fund selection.
What is your niche or experience?	Do they specialize in clients like you (e.g., high-net-worth, young professionals, retirees)? Their experience should align with your specific goals.
What is your investment philosophy?	Understand how they diversify and balance portfolios to match your personalized needs and risk tolerance.
What is your business model and who is my support team?	Identify who you will be working with day-to-day and who can provide support if your primary contact is unavailable.

I Found an Adviser: What Happens Next?

Once you have found the right partner to orchestrate your financial part of life, the process begins to put the puzzle together...

1. **Information Gathering:** The advisor collects detailed information to understand your status, goals, and risk profile.
2. **Initial Assessment:** The first step is generally driven by your most immediate concern. Whether that is identifying if you are on track to retire, handling a rollover, inheritance, reviewing pension options, or making benefit elections.
3. **Strategy and Direction:** The advisor offers suggestions and strategic directions to align your current picture with your long-term goals. This includes income planning (Social Security, RMDs), mitigating risks, discussing diversification, and updating you on relevant changes.
4. **Continual Fine-Tuning:** Financial planning is not a one-time event. The advisor continually monitors your portfolio, identifies the next needs, and offers ongoing support.

Our goal is simple: to ensure your money is used in every way you desire and is protected from anything you don't. Successful wealth management goes far beyond simply saving enough to retire. We focus on

optimizing your entire financial landscape and creating an environment that allows you to enjoy the parts of life most deserving of your attention.

For breakdowns of each relevant topic, please see additional available resources, connect with Klaas on social media outlets, or connect with one of our advisers.

Disclaimer: This article was written by Alyssa Thom and organized with the assistance of generative AI. While AI assisted in the formatting and structuring of this content, all financial data and professional insights have been reviewed and verified for accuracy by Alyssa Thom to ensure they meet our standards of expertise and trustworthiness.