

Share:

Tweet

-
-
-
-



Fee-Only Financial and Investment Planning
 (888) 320-9993



On Course

December 22, 2015

Volume 15, #12

Welcome! You are busy – work, family, and community demand your attention. It's no surprise that financial planning falls off the radar until it feels as though it's too late. This month, we're giving you guidelines on how to put together a great financial advisory team.

If you want help creating a your financial team, remember we're here to help you stay *On Course*!

As we close 2015 – and the 15th year of *On Course* – we want to wish all you the best of the season, thank you for your support, and hope that 2016 will be a special year for each of you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Lane".

-Jennifer Lane, CFP

In This Issue

[Your Financial Team](#)

[Question & Answer](#)

[What's New](#)

[Monthly Tip](#)



Jennifer's Hint

Your Best Financial Advisory Team

Planning your financial future and managing all the pieces can be complicated. We always advise our clients to assemble a team of advisors and professionals that will help create and maintain the right road map for where you are now and where you want to go.

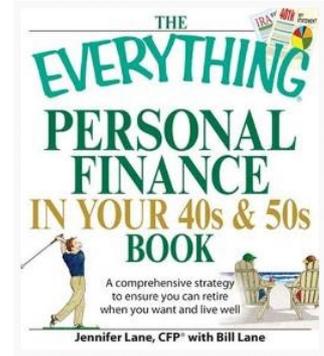
Financial Planners

- Your financial decisions should be based on a plan. As a first step, take time to think about what's important to you, understand where you are now financially, and what your short-term and long-term goals are.

Even if you've given your investment advisor discretionary authority to make investments, your account statement should come independently from an investment company that holds the account, not the advisor. Deposit checks should be written to the investment company, not the advisor.

Get more tips in Jennifer's book

- Once you've done that, your next step is to create a plan with a professional. A fee-only financial planner helps you without bias toward a particular type of investment or insurance product.
- Visit NAPFA.org and CFP.net to find fee-only Certified Financial Planners (CFP®) in your area. Study their websites to learn about their particular expertise.
- Interview at least three planners – even if you pick the first one you speak with, you'll probably increase your understanding of how a planner works.



([click here for link](#))

Investment Advisors / Stockbrokers

- If you're planning on using stockbrokers to recommend investments, it's important to do some research on their background.
- Go to FINRA.org for advice on how to get started, what to look for, and then run broker searches for background and possible complaints.
- When you're interviewing potential brokers, ask how they are compensated. Those brokers compensated on the size of your account might give different advice from those compensated by a commission per trade.
- You can certainly use your financial planner as your investment advisor if you chose to. CFPs often fulfill both roles.

Insurance

- Your insurance agents are your product specialists. Use them in conjunction with the rest of the team, not independent of it.
- Check out NAIC.org, which has helpful information and links to your state's insurance commissioner page.
- You can ask your family, friends, and other advisors for suggestions on potential agents. If you're new to an area, ask your real estate agent for recommendation or do a Google Maps search and interview potential firms.
- Using one insurance company for your home, auto, and umbrella can often lead to discounts.
- Try to compare rates and quotes from different carriers. And ask what potential loopholes might appear, e.g., the insurer doesn't inspect until after you sign up so the premium can change.
- Chances are you'll need another agent for your life insurance. Get referrals from family, friends, and advisors here as well.

Legal

- Lawyers are important team members.
- Wills, house purchases, or concerns about elder family members are examples of when you need legal advice to support your planning.
- Sites like LegalZoom.com are great for educational purposes, but, in the end, you will still need an attorney to help sort through the issues that are specific to your situation. Your state bar association will have a list of attorneys in each specialty. For example, in Massachusetts, go to MassBar.org to search for a lawyer near you.

Accountants / Tax Advisors

- We usually recommend that you use [TurboTax](http://TurboTax.com) to do your taxes first whether you use an accountant or tax specialist. It's your money and you should understand your income, expense, and tax situation.
- CPAs (Certified Public Accountants) can help when you have a complicated tax situation or you are self-employed. Complete due diligence for anyone you chose.

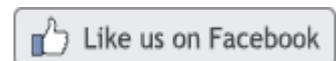
Helpful Websites

CFP.net

FINRA.org

NAPFA.org

NAIC.org



Q&A

Q: My teenager starts driving next spring. Is there anything I can do now to save money on her insurance ?

-- Sharon, Wellesley

A: Sharon, here is a situation where it's so important to have a good local agent. Hopefully, you have one in your town who answers the phone and understands your situation. Talk to your agent now about things you can do such as getting a lower cost car for your daughter, increasing your deductible, or adjusting your coverage. If your daughter goes away to school, you may be able to take her off the policy when she's not home. Good luck!

What's New

- Jennifer recently answered NECN viewer questions about **Medicare and health insurance**. Click [here](#) to watch the segment on her blog.
- Follow us on Facebook! Visit www.facebook.com/AskJennifer and like us!
- Jennifer appears on NECN every other Monday morning at 9:30 am in addition to her Tuesday 6:30 pm appearance.

Compass Planning Associates helps families, individuals, and small-business clients achieve financial security, knowledge, and control over their money. Our **fee-only, client-centered approach** provides education and guidance for achieving financial goals and dreams.

All contents of this newsletter Copyright 2015 Compass Planning

Confirm that you like this.

Click the "Like" button.