

summaries



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Top Five Reasons Clients Come to Sigma

When we look back on 2017, we are thankful for all of our clients, thankful for our colleagues, and thankful for the continued equity bull market. This past year, Sigma has had a significant number of new clients hire our firm. This has been consistent at all three of our offices in Michigan, Ohio, and Florida.

One of the first questions we ask clients is “What brings you in today?” and “What are you looking to achieve?” The following five reasons are typically what we’ve heard from not only new clients but also existing clients as to what they are looking for in an investment adviser.

1. Goal Setting

People often have an idea of what they are saving and investing for (retirement, college education, a new home) but they often do not understand what should be their main concerns. They do not know where to start in setting realistic and attainable goals. The ideas of a “comfortable retirement” or “a college education for my children” are commendable desires, but they are not something you can plan for unless they are quantified and have a time frame attached to them.

We spend a significant amount of time working with clients to get to the heart of what really is their main concern, and figuring out the right path to achieve their goals. Sigma asks these simple questions – “Where are you today? Where

do you want to be? How will you get there?” Then we come up with a detailed plan with answers to those questions.

2. Lack of a cohesive strategy

Clients often come to us with a collection of investment accounts that have no rhyme or reason. Maybe they bought a mutual fund fifteen years ago on the recommendation of a friend, or maybe they have a couple of old 401k accounts from jobs they left years ago. It’s easy to accumulate a lot of “financial clutter”.

Sometimes the clutter is too much to deal with. The client becomes overwhelmed and is not aware of what they have. We can help sort through it all. We can consolidate and simplify accounts, give the client an overall picture of where they are, and then devise an ongoing strategy.

3. Emotional Investing

“I just panicked and sold at the wrong time.” “The stock market scares me.” “I know I should sell ABC, but I’ve held it forever.” Our job is to remove the emotion, and make sure we’re maintaining a long term outlook to meet our clients’ goals.

We spend time educating, planning, and making sure we’re within our clients comfort zones with their investments. Often knowing that a trusted professional is monitoring their investments on a

daily basis is enough to give clients the peace of mind they are seeking.

4. Time Constraints

We have clients who are more than capable of handling their own finances and investments. They just don't have the time to do it. Sometimes they would simply rather be doing something else.

Whether it's an entrepreneur working ninety hour weeks, or a retiree who'd rather be on the golf course, clients often come to us with investment portfolios that they haven't been able, or no longer want, to focus their attention on. Their financial future is too important to be overlooked.

5. Legacy Planning

Often clients come to us and say "I've been handling this portfolio by myself, but my spouse/children would have no idea what to do if something were to happen to me." They want a

trusted advisor in place who can make sure their spouse or children are taken care of when they are no longer capable of handling the portfolio.

We review beneficiaries and estate plans regularly and make sure they are up to date. We can recommend estate planning attorneys and accountants to help where we are not qualified. We've often been called a "financial nag" but our clients are very thankful when things go smoothly and according to their wishes.

Wealth planning and investing has become increasingly and often needlessly complex. At the end of the day, clients come to us needing someone who can help them figure out what works, what matters, what is useful, and what can go wrong. Not many people have the know-how to do that for themselves, and typically not objectively.

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