

NAPFA Recommended Question List

NAPFA encourages all individuals to go through a number of questions with prospective advisors. To aid you in the process, we have taken the time to provide our responses to the questions that NAPFA recommends. We fully embrace the transparency, fee-only, and fiduciary principles NAPFA stands for as an organization. We welcome any additional questions you might have.

Are you or your firm a Registered Investment Advisor?

Curt Stowers is a registered investment advisor with the state of Illinois. His FINRA identification number is 6011385. F5 Financial Planning, L.L.C. is a legal business entity operating in the state of Illinois. Its FINRA CRD identification number is 170674.

What is your educational background?

Curt Stowers obtained his BS (1988), MS (1990) and Ph.D. (1993) in industrial engineering from the University of Illinois. He graduated with highest honors and is listed on the “Bronze Tablet” as one of the top 3% of graduates in his class. In addition, in 2011 Curt completed the financial planning program with Boston University. This program required completion of separate, college level courses in the areas of financial planning, risk management, investments, tax planning, retirement planning and employee benefits, and estate planning.

What are your financial planning, designations, credentials and affiliations?

Curt holds the CFP designation and is a member of NAPFA. Curt is also a member of the Naperville Rotary Club and serves as a board member for the Naperville area YMCAs.

How long have you been offering financial planning services?

Curt began full-time employment as a financial advisor in January 2014. Prior to this, Curt spent 18 years as a corporate executive with Caterpillar. Curt had positions in research, product support, marketing, commercial management, operations, purchasing and business development. During his tenure at Caterpillar he was stationed in multiple locales including Peoria, Denver, Dubai, and Brussels. His responsibilities included managing over 600 peoples at time and having direct profit and loss supervision of over \$100M.

Curt and his wife Sonya established a Subway franchise in 2004. This business remains in operations and continues to be profitable.

Finally, Curt has been providing informal financial guidance to friends, family, and co-workers for decades.

Will you provide me with references from other professionals?

Absolutely.

Have you ever been cited by a professional or regulatory governing body for disciplinary reasons?

No

How many clients do you work with?

Currently we have between ten and twenty clients. The near term vision of the business is to provide comprehensive financial planning services to forty families.

Will you or an associate work with me?

You will work directly with Curt Stowers

Will you sign a Fiduciary Oath?

Absolutely

Do you have a business continuity plan?

Yes. We have an agreement in place with another advisor to step in and support all clients should Curt become incapacitated.

How is your firm compensated and how is your compensation calculated?

We are a fee-only firm; and as such, all of our compensation comes directly from our clients. We use a retainer model where a fixed fee is established a priori to commencing a formal planning engagement.

Do you have an agreement describing your compensation and services that will be provided in advance of the engagement?

You can find a copy of the services we provide [here](#), a copy of our fee schedule [here](#), a copy of our privacy policy [here](#), a copy of our ADV [here](#), and a copy of our client service agreement [here](#).

Do you have a minimum fee?

We have a \$3,000 minimum annual fee. In exceptional situations (e.g. families in need, veterans, etc.) we reserve the right to waive out minimum.

If you earn commissions, where do they come from?

We do not receive or accept any commissions

Are you currently engaged in any other businesses, either as a sole proprietor, partner, officer, employee, trustee, agent or otherwise?

Curt is currently the partial owner of a Subway franchise in Lakin, KS. There is a full-time, on-site manager for this business.

Curt also is available for speaking, business consulting, or writing engagements related to personal development and/or financial planning. Curt is continually learning and uses these opportunities to further develop his skills to better assist his clients.

Does any member of your firm act as a general partner, participate in, or receive compensation from investments you may recommend to me?

No. We are a fee-only firm and receive no compensation from anyone other than our clients.

Do you receive referral fees from attorneys, accountants, insurance agents, mortgage brokers, or others?

No. We are a fee-only firm and accept no referral fees of any sort.

Do you receive on-going income from any of the mutual funds that you recommend in the form of “12(b)1” fees, “trailing” commissions, or other continuing payouts?

No. We are a fee-only firm and accept no compensation related to investments from external (e.g. non-client) parties.

Are there financial incentives for you to recommend certain financial products?

No. All financial products that are recommended are based on what we fee are the best available and most suitable for our clients.

What personal financial issues will your services address for me?

We address goal planning, cash flow management, income tax planning, insurance, education planning, employee benefits, estate planning, charitable giving, and investment management.

In addition, Curt has extensive experience in managing and developing professionals. While he does not provide explicit “career coaching” services, many clients do involve Curt in discussions regarding their professional development.

Do you provide a comprehensive written analysis of my financial situation and recommendations?

Yes. We also provide access to an on-line Wealth Management tool that allows our clients to view their financial plans on an ongoing basis. This tool also provides a secure file transfer facility to protect confidential client information.

Do you offer assistance to implement the plan?

Absolutely. Except for exceptional situations we only engage clients in a long-term advisory capacity. As such, we work closely with the client to ensure that plans are fully executed.

Do you offer continuous, on-going advice regarding my financial affairs, including advice on non-investment related financial issues?

Absolutely. Curt feels strongly that the financial aspect of a plan is only one element of it. The “F5” in the company name stands for Faith, Friends and Family, Fitness, and Finance. Accordingly, Curt works with clients to ensure that clients consider goals in each of these areas

Other than receiving my permission to debit my investment account for your fee, do you take custody of, or will you have access to, my assets?

No.

If you were to provide me on-going investment advice services, do you require “discretionary” trading authority over my investment accounts?

Yes. We require discretionary authority to implement the Investment Policy Statement (IPS) that we establish for all clients. The IPS describes why investments are being made, how the investments will be allocated, and what cash flows are expected. The IPS provides clear guidelines for investments; and, accordingly, investments are not implemented until an IPS has been fully developed.

Do you have many clients like me?

Our clients tend to be corporate executives, small business owners, and families. They understand the value of having a plan in place to achieve their goals and appreciate having a professional in place to make sure that the plan is being executed and updated as appropriate. Many of our clients have extensive knowledge of financial markets and are fully capable of implementing a financial plan independently; however, they are often too busy to invest the requisite time to properly execute the necessary comprehensive plan. Finally, our clients are not looking to “beat the market” or “for the next big thing”. They understand markets are efficient and look to capitalize on the long term economic growth that one would expect with an ever expanding world population.