



AN INDEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE.

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EVALUATING INVESTMENT ADVISORS

Key Questions to Ask

Specially prepared for United Airlines Pilots nearing retirement.

You have built a substantial investment and retirement nest egg over the years. Soon, you can relax and enjoy life. *But who is going to manage your assets after you retire?* You could try to do it yourself. Or, if you are like many, you may decide that investment management is best left to professionals.

At Cleary Gull, we urge investors to interview several investment advisors before selecting just one. Evaluate firms by examining their *people, philosophy, process, and price*. More often than not, these four crucial ingredients will determine investment *performance*.

The most common mistake made by consumers in the adviser selection process is accepting marketing information from advisors as accurate, according to a study by Paladin Registry in 2007. Review of the Investment Advisor’s legal filings (Form ADV) and referrals to existing clients are great sources of additional information.

Make sure the advisor can provide completely conflict-free and unbiased investment advice. After all, financial advisors can be found in a variety of settings from brokerage firms to bank trust departments, to insurance companies — the list goes on. Ask questions. You deserve to know whether or not your money will be managed free of internal biases.

Investment advisors generally fall into two camps — those using mutual funds, and those using individual securities and/or mutual funds. If your portfolio is designed around mutual funds, you will pay two layers of fees — the fee your investment advisor charges *and* the mutual fund’s investment management fee and expenses. If your investment advisor uses individual securities, you will want to be clear on exactly what services are included in the advisory fee. Are securities trading costs included? Are bonds included in the fee, or does the advisor reserve the right to “mark up” your bonds? Be sure you understand all the fees and expenses involved. They can have a dramatic effect on investment performance over time.

To help you get started, Cleary Gull has prepared a list of questions and provided our response. We have also included a blank list you can use as you interview other investment advisors.

You deserve straight answers to these important questions.

Q7. *Describe your investment philosophy. Do you base advice on asset allocation? Market timing? Do you use mutual funds or individual securities?*

A7. At Cleary Gull, we believe in asset style allocation. We base our recommendations upon ongoing research and statistical return/risk analysis, client lifestyle requests and specific goals and objectives. We developed and use a proprietary research and analysis tool called the SMART System (Strategic Manager Attribution Rating Technique). This valuable rating tool encompasses both quantitative and qualitative analysis and allows us to identify, evaluate and track the most appropriate independent managers for your portfolio. We also analyze non-performance issues such as the overall experience level of the staff, educational qualifications and turnover of the accounts. We hire managers from a pool of 5,500 of the most talented worldwide. These managers specialize in a chosen asset class and select individual stocks to help maximize the return on your portfolio. Additionally, we search and evaluate over 14,500 mutual funds.

Q8. *Do you sell any financial products, including life and long-term care insurance and annuities?*

A8. Your best interest demands a conflict-free environment. For that reason, we do not sell commission-based financial products such as life or long-term care insurance and/or annuities. We will assist you in securing insurance and related products through other independent consultants and brokers. Cleary Gull's involvement typically results in insurance products that are better designed, with lower internal pricing than traditional retail products. We receive no compensation of any kind for this review and referral service.

Q9. *Do you provide historical performance records for the investments you recommend? Is this performance audited? Do you provide appropriate benchmarks for your recommended investments?*

A9. Yes. Your Investment Management Proposal includes a recommended asset allocation, AIMR compliant and audited performance report on each independent money manager we recommend and on the portfolio performance in total. Finally, all performance is presented against customized relative benchmarks so you can see an apples-to-apples comparison and determine how much value is actually added.

Q10. *Do you provide a hypothetical projection of account values, retirement income and income tax? Is this a one-time or ongoing service?*

A10. Initially, you will receive an Investment Management Proposal prepared for your unique set of circumstances. The proposal includes a detailed investment policy statement and a Wealthcare Report, which employs a Monte Carlo analysis to model uncertainty and provides you with a confidence level that your retirement plan will deliver the lifestyle you seek without undue risk or sacrifice. Also included is an asset allocation analysis based upon your goals and risk tolerance along with full investment management recommendations. We update and review your Wealthcare on an annual basis to keep your goals and investment program on track.

Q11. *How do you manage fixed-income portfolios? Do you use bond funds or individual bonds? Do you purchase bonds out of the firm's inventory? Do you "mark up" the cost of these individual bonds?*

A11. Our philosophy toward fixed-income is very conservative since fixed income's purpose is to dampen the volatility of equity accounts and provide retirement income. We "block purchase" individual investment-grade corporate and government bonds using a well-diversified approach. We retain multiple, independent bond dealers to negotiate the best price on the purchase of bonds. Our approach is conflict-free. Cleary Gull does not "mark up" the bonds in your portfolio.

Q12. *Who actually holds my investments and is my account insured?*

A12. We retain the services of one of the nation's largest and most respected clearing firms. Our clearing firm is responsible for executing and processing security transactions and carrying your account on a fully-disclosed basis for Cleary Gull. The total net asset value of your account is fully insured.

Q13. *What kind of statements do you provide to track my investments?*

A13. You will receive both monthly brokerage and quarterly performance statements and reviews. Your quarterly performance review provides full portfolio and individual manager performance and comparative data against relevant benchmarks. You can also review your account on our secure Internet site 24/7. Screens illustrate all current account values and security positions, account activity, and your current asset allocation. Our password-protected site allows you to download your account data directly into Quicken. In Investor Connect click *Visitor* to take a *Virtual Visit*.

Q14. *Do you provide IRA liquidation analysis and Required Minimum Distribution calculations?*

A14. Yes, we prepare an IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) analysis for each of our clients. Naturally, we use the most current IRS regulations dated April 12, 2002, subject to the latest revisions since then. With proper estate planning, we can help you structure your IRA to continue to grow tax-deferred over not only your lifetime but that of your spouse and children. Cleary Gull works with all your other advisors to ensure the greatest tax deferral and wealth protection opportunities possible.

Q15. *Do you provide estate planning?*

A15. Yes. A Cleary Gull Certified Financial Planner (CFPTM), Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) and/or Accredited Estate Planner (AEP) will review your unique situation. We will help you determine goals and objectives and transfer tax liabilities. We will also analyze strategies to lower taxes and investigate opportunities to enhance and preserve your entire estate. If necessary, we will help you find independent legal counsel and work with them to implement your family's plan.

Q16. *Do you have a program to assist surviving beneficiaries?*

A16. Definitely. We are here for you now and we will be here for your loved ones after you are gone. Our Family Survivorship Guidance Program is one of the most valuable services we provide to our clients — we help spouses and surviving beneficiaries when they need help most. When you become a Cleary Gull client, we assist in organizing your estate objectives, documents and records. At the appropriate time, we will be there to help ensure a seamless transition.

Q17. *Describe any other services you offer.*

A17. Our investment management service includes quarterly portfolio performance tracking, asset allocation analysis and appropriate investment adjustments. You have unlimited access to your service team on any investment, estate, insurance and tax planning issue. You will enjoy unlimited check writing, credit card, bill payment, funds transfer, direct deposit and Quicken downloads. As an optional service, you can have access to a full service brokerage account for making individual security transactions.

Q18. *How are you compensated? What is your fee? Are there additional management fees or trading costs? Do you employ “best price” execution on trades?*

A18. We are a fee-based investment advisor. Our annual fee is a flat percentage of your investment account, divided by four and charged quarterly. Many clients satisfy fees on a pre-tax basis, from their IRA itself, if applicable. Non-Qualified accounts are able to deduct our full advisory fee for income tax purposes. Your account will also be charged for the actual transaction costs of trading your individual securities, amounting to pennies-per-share. All Cleary Gull clients benefit from institutional trading and “best price” execution.

INVESTMENT ADVISOR EVALUATION

FIRM NAME: _____

1. What is your firm's corporate structure and experience and how many employees do you have?
2. Who are your clients? How many families do you serve?
3. Who will be my contact person and where will I meet with him or her?
4. Who will service my account after I become a client?
5. What is the background, education and experience of those giving advice and making investment decisions?
6. Is your firm a Registered Investment Advisor?
7. Describe your investment philosophy. Do you base advice on asset allocation? Market timing? Do you use mutual funds or individual securities?
8. Do you sell any financial products, including life and long-term care insurance and annuities?
9. Do you provide historical performance records for the investments you recommend? Is this performance audited? Do you provide appropriate benchmarks for your recommended investments?
10. Do you provide a hypothetical projection of account values, retirement income and income tax? Is this a one-time or ongoing service?
11. How do you manage fixed-income (bond) portfolios? Do you use bond funds or individual bonds? Do you purchase bonds out of the firm's inventory? Do you reserve the right to "mark up" the cost of these individual bonds?
12. Who actually holds my investments and is my account insured?
13. What kind of statements do you provide to track my investments?
14. Do you provide IRA liquidation analysis and Required Minimum Distribution calculations?
15. Do you provide estate planning?
16. Do you have a program to assist surviving beneficiaries?
17. Describe any other individual services you offer.
18. How are you compensated? What is your fee? Are there additional management fees or trading costs? Do you employ "best price" execution on trades?