

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN INTERVIEWING **A WEALTH MANAGER**

What you need to ask your prospective wealth managers



THE INSIDER'S VIEW



Lee Goggin
CO-FOUNDER

Since 2012, Findawealthmanager has helped thousands of clients navigate the often confusing world of finance by adding clarity and a sensible approach to finding your ideal match.

Whilst our initial matching service is online, the next step on the journey to making a decision is anything but. The industry is often seen as confusing and opaque, but help is here. Over the last 10 years we have pieced together our learnings on how you can navigate the industry and find your best partner quickly and efficiently. And the benefits for you are significant if you do - we find that relationships matched through our service typically last three times longer than those where the matching service has not been involved.

How do you choose which wealth manager is best? Aren't they all the same? Isn't it about whether you have personal chemistry with the person sitting on the other side of the table as well as fees and performance?

This report is designed to help streamline the process and focus your decision making. We've compiled these top questions to ask prospective wealth managers and included a useful scoring sheet to help quantify your learnings.

Inertia remains a big issue in financial services because people fear that finding a provider for the first time or changing provider will lead to hassle, mistakes being made and maybe even additional expense. Incredibly, research indicates that people are more likely to get a divorce than change bank.

We're proud to say that the process really does work, so see it through, don't give up and use these questions to deduce which of your options stack-up the best.

And please remember, our team is here to help you.



If you are confused, have questions, need some impartial feedback, please get in touch with us.

CLICK HERE OR EMAIL US AT

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SPEAK WITH US

Here are **10 KEY QUESTIONS** to help you interview prospective wealth managers.



QUESTION

1

HOW DOES THE INSTITUTION'S HISTORY AND SET-UP IMPACT ON HOW YOU WORK WITH CLIENTS?

Learning more about the ownership structure and evolution of a firm may give important clues as to its service ethos and strategic direction.

Some clients favour smaller, independent (and often regional) wealth managers, while others have need of the wider capabilities on offer at the bigger brands.

All the wealth managers on the [findaWEALTHMANAGER.com](https://findawealthmanager.com) panel are FCA-regulated, manage over £500m in assets and have been in business for at least five years. It may be that you are a good fit for a range of firms of different “flavours”, however. We represent a panel of leading wealth managers, ranging from family offices and boutiques through to the wealth management divisions of international banking groups and private client asset managers.

Also ask about how your funds are kept safe. Custodian institutions, third party to the wealth manager institution, are typically used for the safekeeping of assets. It's important to know about these relationships - ask what would happen to your funds if one of the institutions went bust.

**£500 MILLION IN CLIENT ASSETS =
THE MINIMUM SIZE INSTITUTION**

QUESTION

2

WHAT ARE THE STANDOUT ELEMENTS OF YOUR OFFERING FOR ME?

Finding out about a firm's full service offering could provide lots of points for future discussion with your eventual adviser.

You may only require investment management advice at this juncture, but wealth planning issues like selling businesses, retirement and inheritance are often the trigger point for seeking professional advice.

You may be surprised to learn the full range of products and services that wealth managers offer, with in-house [financial planning](#) assistance increasingly essential. Private client mortgages and [Lombard loans](#) (being able to borrow against your portfolio), responsible/[impact investing](#), wealth structuring, inheritance tax mitigation and philanthropic guidance are just a sample of what the wealth managers on our panel can offer.



QUESTION

3

WHO IS YOUR TYPICAL CLIENT AND HOW DO YOU HELP ME TO ACHIEVE MY INVESTMENT GOALS

If you hear how people similar to you are assisted with their wider objectives this can often lead to useful discussions about your broader needs.

Although all wealth managers have diverse client bases, it should be easy to provide you with a notion of what a typical client is looking for and how the firm can help.

You might even find that the firm can help you network with fellow entrepreneurs or people in the same profession, or explore co-investment opportunities with like-minded investors.

Wealth managers are incredibly cognisant on privacy, but prospective providers will always be forthcoming with “case study” type information outlining how they have delivered on clients’ wealth planning and investment objectives.

QUESTION

4

HOW DO YOU MEASURE INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE AND HOW DO YOU COMPARE TO YOUR PEERS?

Ask to see performance figures for a typical portfolio over several periods (one, three and five years at least) to make sure that the firm delivers consistently and can ride out downturns in the market to your satisfaction.

Wealth managers **benchmark the investment performance they achieve** in a variety of ways to better reflect the precise **composition** of portfolios. They will often also rate their performance against the rest of the industry via third-party benchmarks.

A good wealth manager will be able to give an explanation of any periods of slight underperformance and this is perfectly normal (indeed, consistent outperformance should make alarm bells ring). Risk management should always inform your thinking about returns.



QUESTION

5

WHAT DUE DILIGENCE DO YOU CARRY OUT ON INVESTMENTS AND HOW IS YOUR INVESTMENT STRATEGY FORMED?

It is useful to learn more about a wealth manager's investment process as the investment performance and risk management are founded upon robust foundations.

The implosion of the Woodford Equity Income Fund taught harsh lessons on fund due diligence and liquidity. Any good wealth manager should be able to offer robust reassurance over the due diligence and research applied in investment selection.

The information given about investment committees, research capabilities and due diligence processes should provide you with the confidence you need.

TOP3 REASONS I CHOOSE MY WEALTH MANAGER

FROM **OVER 10 YEARS** AND **10,000 CLIENT REFERRALS**, HERE ARE THE FACTORS OUR CLIENTS HAVE TOLD US ARE THE MOST CRITICAL WHEN CHOOSING A WEALTH MANAGER.



Service

They say first impressions matter and in this case it's true. Wealth managers who are personal and professional in their outreach will win your business



Communication

If things aren't explained well and you walk away scratching your head, or if your wealth manager is slow to reply at the start of your relationship - it doesn't bode well.



Company material

Firms that send easy to read, well-designed and digital friendly presentations, proposals and reports, are more likely to be at the top of your decision making

2x

Twice as many people ranked personal chemistry more important in choosing a wealth manager than performance

Here are some notable omissions from the top list:

FEES

PERFORMANCE

INVESTMENT PROCESS

Whilst these are no-doubt important, clients often see them as hygiene factors rather than decision clinchers.

QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK:

- Can you work closely with the individual you are meeting? If not, then don't be afraid to ask for another
- Do you like how they interact with you to win your business? This could be a taste of what's to come
- Are you a similar profile to most of their clients? It's preferable not to be an outlier.

QUESTION

6

HOW DO YOU ENSURE THAT INVESTMENTS ARE SUITABLE FOR ME?

Investment suitability is a very hot topic between the financial regulator and the wealth management industry. Firms have an obligation to make sure their solutions offered to you are suitable.

The **risk-profiling** procedures that a wealth manager carries out with clients are not only a regulatory obligation, but also the foundation of a productive relationship. Much of the added value that a wealth manager provides is derived from a holistic understanding of your situation and objectives that will hopefully get ever deeper over a relationship that could last years or even decades.

Eliciting pertinent information and true attitudes is where wealth management advisers really shine, which is why **robo-advice only has limited applicability** to people with significant wealth and complex needs. A desire to really get to know you should be in evidence. It's not only of benefit for you to avoid mis-selling practices, but could also mean you are shown more interesting investment opportunities versus a narrower selection. In summary, this is a very important process to understand.



Get a clear idea of how the organization translates what emerges about your profile and needs, into the construction of investment portfolios



Lara Clarke
CLIENT DIRECTOR

QUESTION

7

HOW DO YOUR COSTS AND FEES COMPARE TO THE REST OF THE MARKET?

Higher fees do not necessarily indicate superior investment performance, and it is in any case performance net of fees which is the key metric to consider.

Fee structures are now more transparent than ever, but there are many "moving parts" involved in managing wealth that mean costs are multi-part. You should however be able to get a good explanation of a firm's fee schedule, both as an overall Total Expense Ratio, (TER) and broken into its constituent parts.

Seemingly small differences in fees can compound to make a meaningful difference to long-term returns, so beware writing off "negligible" amounts.

Remember that our process puts you in a good position to negotiate too.

You should also see evidence that a potential provider works hard to keep costs down. It is often underappreciated how wealth managers can save investors money through access to cheaper share classes for example.



QUESTION

8

WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO CLIENT SERVICE?

Excellent service comes with the wealth management territory, but firms all have slightly different styles that you should explore.

You may find that one highly digitised provider suits you best because it offers real time portfolio information via an online portal. On the flipside, you may prefer an institution which prioritises face-to-face meetings and a more traditional touch.

Ask how often you will meet your adviser and via what means you will be contacted in normal circumstances.

Find out what kind of communications you can expect from the firm, paying particular attention to investment reporting; what they do to get feedback from clients; and what a typical relationship trajectory looks like. Tailoring things to your needs should figure highly.



QUESTION

9

WHO WILL BE WORKING WITH ME?

Don't be afraid to ask about alternative advisers to the ones proposed if you feel that you could find a better fit.

It is vital that you can work well with your advisor and build a trusted relationship, which is why meeting potential wealth managers can become such a weighty task without the objective [shortlisting our matching service](#) provides.

Ask if you will have one main point of contact, or a team, and what the procedures are to ensure continuity of service. An adviser changing firm is often the trigger point for clients to [explore alternative wealth managers](#), but the best providers will always minimise disruption if this should occur.

In fact, many firms will now offer a selection of advisor candidates up front, as personal connections are key to helping you find the right option, and critically for the longevity of the relationship.

QUESTION

10

HOW WILL YOU HELP ME TO GET THE MOST OUT OF MY WEALTH?

The premium service wealth managers provide recognises that wealth is about lifestyle and personal ambitions rather than just numbers.

Therefore, it is typical that firms provide a rich programme of thought-leadership content and events to help you make the most of your financial wellbeing for example educating younger family members about the responsibility of inheriting and managing money is often a draw.

You might also be drawn to firms that support the arts, sport or other interests as this can lead to exciting opportunities to meet with advisers and other clients similar to you at exclusive events. You are meant to enjoy your wealth after all!

These touches may or may not mean much to you, and such things are a matter of personal taste. This is why we introduce wealth managers which are all a sound objective match so that you can focus on more personal factors.

OUR TEAM HAS INTRODUCED
OVER 10,000 CLIENTS TO WEALTH
MANAGERS



WEALTH MANAGER ASSESSMENT GRID

This grid will help you compare wealth managers side-by-side and complete a highly efficient selection process. We always recommend you assess at least 3 options. This is your money after all - do not simply jump onboard with a wealth manager after one meeting. It's also important to create an air of competition which has benefits on service provided, not to mention fees offered.

Completing this process will give you confidence in making the right choice, so you can put your wealth to work without delay. And remember, even once you have been long established in a relationship, it is healthy to periodically review your wealth manager to see if you are still getting the best possible deal. Changing wealth manager is easier and quicker than you might think.

	Institution 1	Institution 2	Institution 3
01 History/set-up and impact on clients?	/5	/5	/5
02 Standout elements of the offering	/5	/5	/5
03 Typical client and objectives	/5	/5	/5
04 Investment performance and peer comparison	/5	/5	/5
05 Investment strategy and due diligence	/5	/5	/5
06 Suitability of my investments	/5	/5	/5
07 Cost comparison	/5	/5	/5
08 Client service levels	/5	/5	/5
09 My adviser/Relationship manager and the team	/5	/5	/5
10 Added value	/5	/5	/5
TOTAL	/60	/60	/60

WHAT'S NEXT?



SECURE THE WINNER

- ❏ If you're new to wealth management through an inheritance or a business sale, its key to get your money working hard. With inflation ever present and world events causing so much consternation let a professional help you.
- ❏ Already got a wealth manager and they aren't up to much? It's easy to change and the new wealth manager can do much of the heavy lifting around changing provider. Give them the authority and they can even have the dreaded "I'm leaving you" conversation too.
- ❏ Procrastination often gets in the way of making a sensible decision about the future of your money. Get your finances working harder today. **GET IN TOUCH.** We are here for you right now for free and without obligation.

DON'T GET STALLED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

It's easy to meet a shortlist of best-matched wealth managers at a time to suit you through our service and that can be arranged either on the phone video call or in person. Provide our [smart tool](#) with details about your profile to have the market filtered down to the wealth managers best suited to your precise needs based on fact. Our expert team are also on hand to discuss your options at any point in the process – **just get in touch.**

It's important not to get bogged down in the selection process as the compounding nature of returns means that the earlier you make your wealth work as hard as it can, the earlier you can meet your financial objectives by having the most sensible plan in place for you.

It's easy to let finding a wealth management relationship fall down the to-do list, but in fact getting good advice could be the key to most of what you want from life.

Let us set up a few conveniently arranged meetings with wealth managers who could add a lot of value for you, and ask these 10 key questions to decide on precisely the right provider for you.

Our team has introduced **over 10,000** clients to wealth managers. We know the industry inside out and we want to help your wealth find the right home.

GET IN TOUCH

SPEAK TO US ABOUT YOUR FINDINGS

NAVIGATING YOUR WEALTH. MADE SIMPLE.



Useful links on our website

[ABOUT US](#)[ASK US A QUESTION](#)[READ OUR WEALTH INSIGHTS](#)

[findaWEALTHMANAGER.com](#) is an independent and impartial service designed to help clients navigate the opaque world of finance and wealth planning. We partner with the leading UK firms who commit to best practice and better value fees.

Use our [smart tool](#) to get matched to the right firm and then our experienced team will help you meet your best placed manager.

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