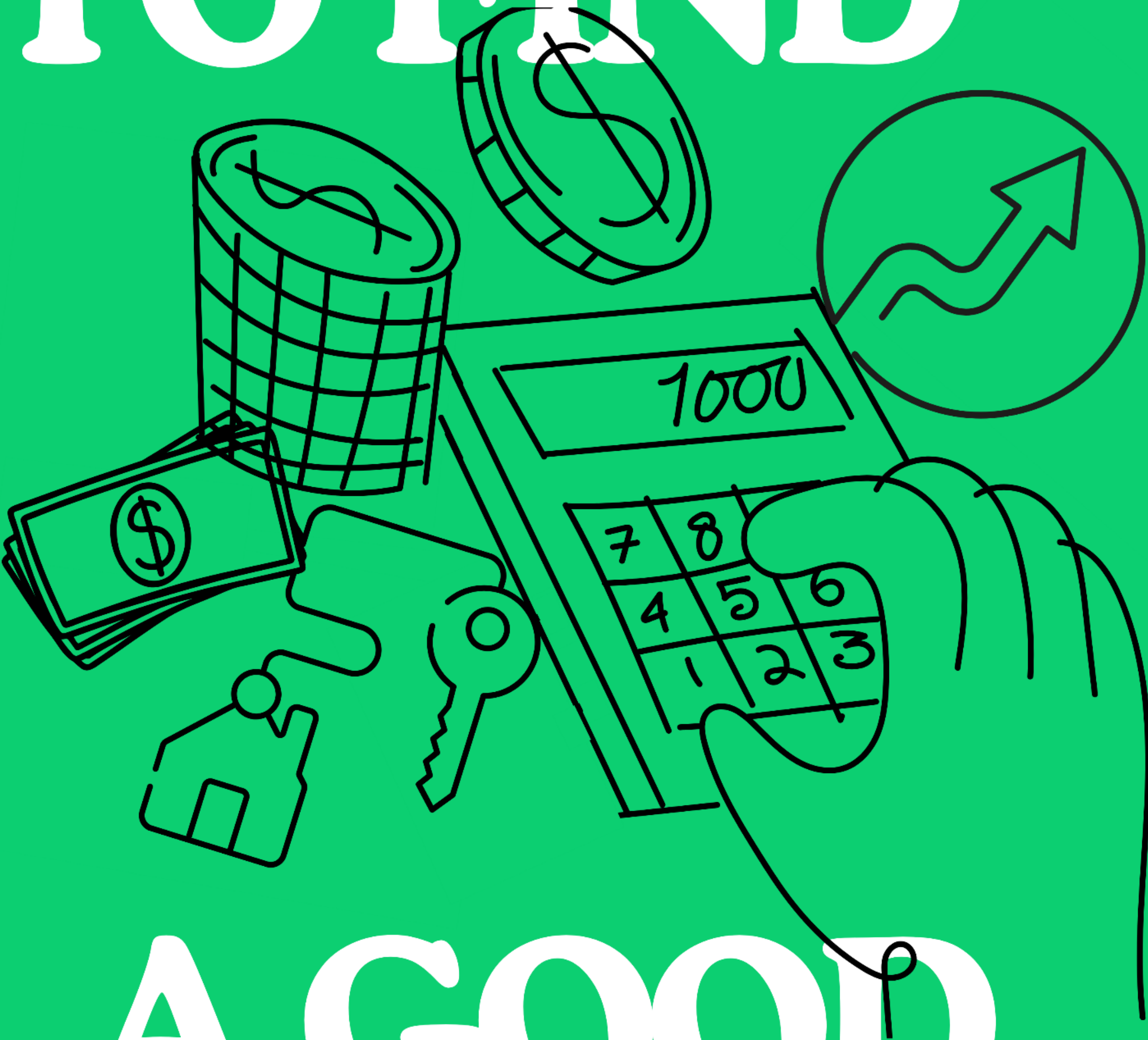
WealthAdviser

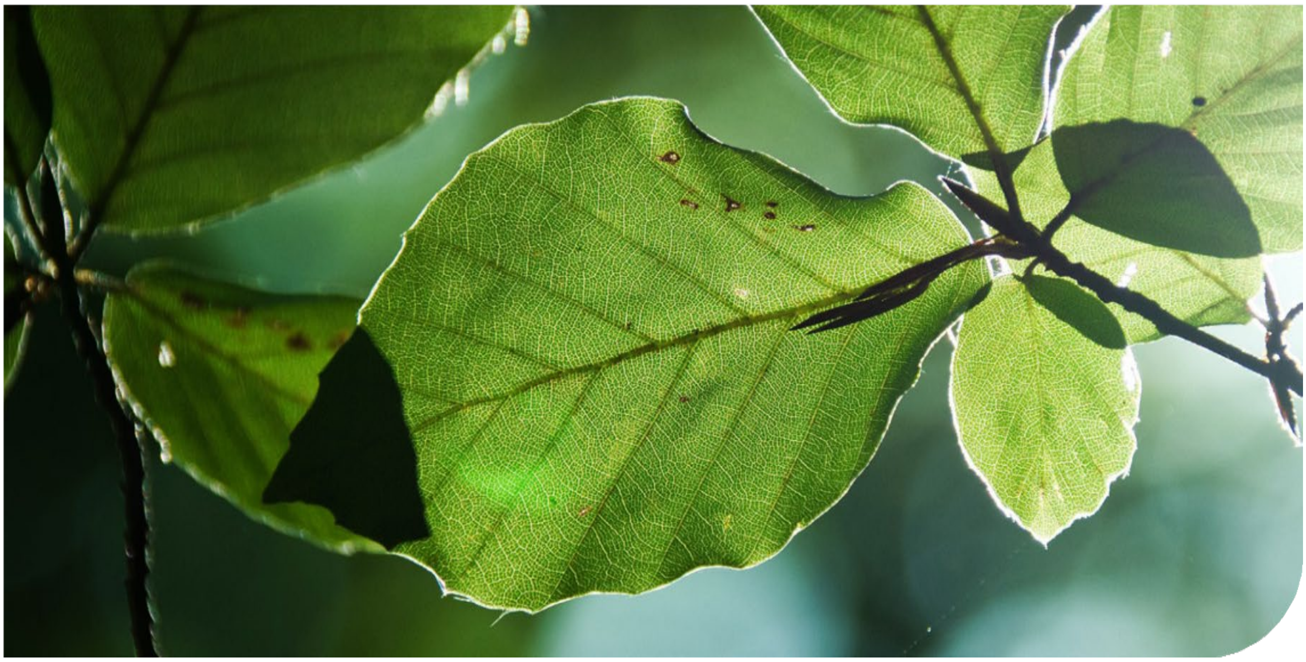
HOW TO FIND



A GOOD (AND RIGHT)

FINANCIAL PLANNER FOR YOU

Contents



Before you get started

This digital handbook contains general and factual information only, and is part of the Wealth Adviser library, published by:

- Wealth Today (AFSL 340289)
- Sentry Advice (AFSL 227748)
- Synchron Advice (AFSL 243313)
- Millennium3 (AFSL 244252)

Before acting on any information contained herein you should consider if it is suitable for you. You should also consider consulting a suitably qualified financial, tax and/or legal adviser.

Information in this handbook is no substitute for professional financial advice.

We encourage you to seek professional financial advice before making any investment or financial decisions. We would obviously love the opportunity to have that conversation with you, and at the rear of this handbook you will find information about our authorised representative and how to go about booking an appointment.

If ultimately you decide not to meet with us we still encourage you to consult with another suitably licensed and qualified financial adviser.

In any circumstance, before investing in any financial product you should obtain and read a Product Disclosure Statement and consider whether it is appropriate for your objectives, situation and needs.

Letter from the Wealth Adviser Library

Dear Reader

Welcome to the Wealth Adviser Library

This library was built specifically to facilitate the provision of sound financial information to everyday Australians.

Our mission is to build an accessible, comprehensively supported team of members who share our vision and commitment to providing tailored financial advice and a new foundation of financial understanding and security for everyone.

With a national network of likeminded experts, we have the potential to provide the financial building blocks for future generations.

Knowledge gives you a huge advantage

We believe that knowledge gives you a huge advantage in creating and effectively managing wealth; in planning to reach your goals; and in being prepared for whatever unexpected twists and turns life may present.

That's why our team of experts has created this series of digital handbooks and manuals that seek to inform you of not only the benefits but also the potential risks and pitfalls of various strategies and investments.

We trust you enjoy this publication and find it informative and professionally presented. Of course, your feedback is always welcome as we strive to continually offer content in a format that is relevant to you.

Take the next step

Wealth Adviser (a division of WT Financial Group Limited) supports more than 400 privately owned and operated advice practices around the country. We invite you to engage with one of our advisers to discuss what it was you were hoping to achieve when you obtained this handbook, and to establish if they can help you achieve your goals and objectives.

At the rear of this handbook you will find details on how to book an appointment.

Wealth Adviser Library

Introduction

Do you need a financial adviser?

How do you feel when you think about your financial prospects? Do you feel dread when you think about the future and the state of your finances? Are you uncertain of how you'll be able to afford the life you want, and provide for your family?

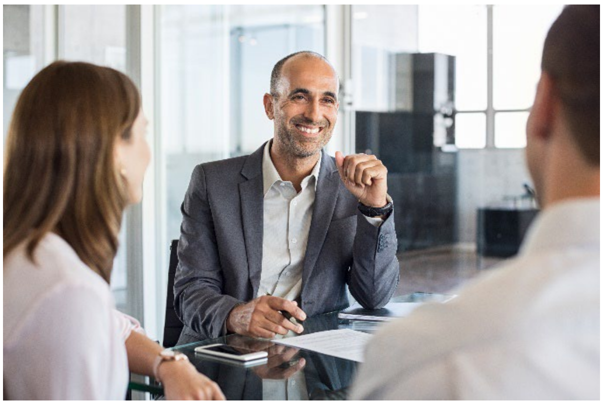
Are you riddled by indecision when it comes to investing your money?

Have you jumped in at the deep end and completely stretched yourself to pay your bills and mortgage?

Do you wonder how you'll have enough money to fund your retirement, send your kids to the right schools, and still enjoy a holiday now and again?

Are you well-protected should something compromise your ability to work?

Most of us have money-related concerns and addressing them will move us toward a more secure future and create peace of mind. Regardless of stage of life, most people can benefit dramatically from a solid financial plan, monitored through consistent visioning and goal setting with trusted, sound advice along the way. A long term commitment to planning and reviewing is the primary difference between the financially successful and those who do not thrive financially.



What does a financial planner do?

Basic financial education is not taught in schools (but it should be!)

Specialised advice has historically come from different sources such as accountants, stock brokers, lawyers, insurance agents and other financial professionals. Financial advisers began emerging in the 1980s to fill the need for a specialised finance professional to help people with all of their money-related needs especially superannuation. The industry was not immediately regulated.

Through a series of reports and government initiatives, The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) developed minimum training requirements and legislation to regulate the financial advisory industry. By law a financial adviser must have a license or must be an authorised representative of an institution with a license in order to provide financial advice.

A financial adviser's role is to work closely with you to understand your current financial position, help you get clear about your financial goals and highlight any issues you may be currently facing that would prevent you from achieving those goals.

In essence they will become your "financial coach", developing a tailor-made financial plan for your situation, taking into account your lifestyle and objectives.

Think of any athlete or sporting team that has achieved success and you realise that, behind them there is almost always a great coach guiding them and pushing them toward success.

The benefits of financial planning

Specifically, a good financial adviser is also able to help you:

- Identify and highlight your financial goals as well as give you the guidance and direction to achieve those goals
- Help identify all of your financial resources and assist you to utilise those resources to get the best possible result whilst maintaining an acceptable work/life balance
- Prepare for important lifestyle or financial changes such as having children, buying a house or retiring
- Grow your income and investments
- Protect your income, investments and financial position
- Simplify investing and wealth creation whilst providing you with choices.
- Provide ease of mind and security about your current and future financial situation.
- See the big picture and help manage your finances on a "whole wealth" level.

The planning process

The financial planning process can be broken down into 7 simple steps:

1. **Gather financial information and data**

   An adviser will obtain relevant financial information such as a record of your assets and liabilities, income and expenditure and your attitude toward risk.

2. Identify a client's goals and objectives

   What you want to achieve and when you want to achieve it -your vision for the future.

3. Identify any financial issues

   Once an adviser has gathered financial information and has an understanding of your goals and objectives, they can identify any issues and barriers to achieve those goals.

4. Develop a financial strategy

   A strategy will be developed and discussed with all the necessary fine tuning that may be required. This is an important step in the process and a good adviser will make sure it happens as it allows the process to be interactive rather than dogmatic.

5. Provide a Statement of Advice (financial plan)

   Once a strategy has been agreed, it will be provided in the form of a written, individualised 'Statement of Advice' outlining a detailed investment plan and the agreed course of action.

6. Implement the plan/recommendations The written plan is agreed upon and implemented.

7. Review, revise and maintain the financial plan. The plan and strategy is reviewed, at least annually, to ensure it is still meeting your financial needs and investment

goals. This last step is the most important part of the process. Many a good plan has fallen by the wayside through a lack of proper review, apathy and lack of commitment on behalf of both adviser and client.

A proper review involves much more than a discussion of how your portfolio has performed over the last year. Find an adviser with a commitment to a comprehensive review process and you will have found a great adviser!

Before you engage a financial adviser

What's on your mind?

A good first step before seeking any financial advice is to think about your current financial situation and any concerns you may have.

A few questions you may want to ask yourself as you begin the process of finding a financial adviser are:

- What resources do you currently have?
- Do you know what your income and expenses are?
- How about your assets and liabilities?
- What are your concerns and priorities, financially?
- What investment time frames would you consider?
- How do you feel about your work/life balance?

Goals, objectives & dreams

Identifying your goals and dreams and writing them down is a recommended first step before the planning process begins. This will allow your adviser to get a clearer understanding of what your intentions are, allowing them to develop and formulate the most suitable plan to get you there.

This is the foundation upon which your goals and wealth creation will be built. Any good adviser should be able to examine the sum total of all your financial resources. He should then customise and develop a strategy that not only meets your particular goals, but also allows you to achieve the maximum potential with the resources available to you.

Investment time frames

Gaining an understanding of your investment time frames is important and will help your adviser develop a plan and utilise products which match your situation.

For example, if you only wanted to invest for one year, purchasing an investment property may not be the most viable option. A better solution may be moving into a cash management fund or fixed interest investments.

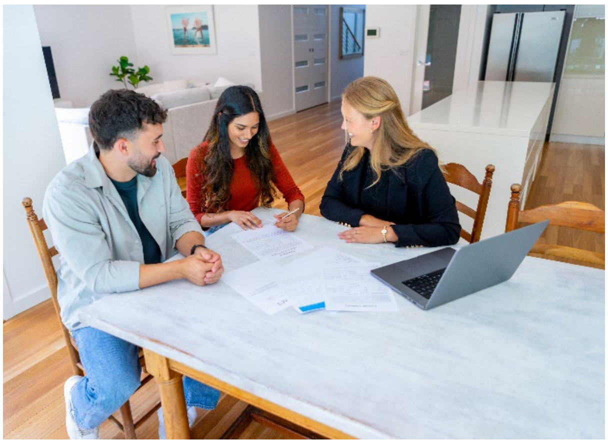
Some advisers will define these time frames in the following way:

- Short term 1-2 years
- Medium term 3-5 years
- Long term five years plus

However, for others 10 years is considered short term, 20 years' medium term and lifetime is considered long term.

Either way, it is important for you to first develop your own idea in relation to time, at the same time your adviser can also instruct you in this area.

Don't be surprised if your adviser guides you toward a longer investment horizon, as having a longer time frame will decrease the impact of volatility and risk on your plan and overall strategies.



Finding a financial adviser

So what exactly is a financial adviser?

A financial adviser is a licensed professional who helps you make better decisions when it comes to your money and helps you focus on planning for your future. They will also educate you about all money-related matters and help you understand the ramifications of your current money habits and future investment decisions.

You may feel uncertain or nervous about interviewing prospective financial planners. That's natural. Take your time. You are hiring someone to do an important job.

Where to begin looking

By now you should have a basic understanding of the financial planning process and you've prepared and equipped yourself to take the next step. It's time to find a financial adviser that is best suited to assessing your needs and helping you achieve your goals.

There are many avenues to explore to find a good financial adviser.

One good place to start is to speak to family and friends to see whether they use an adviser or whether they are able to recommend someone.

Recommendations from other professionals such as accountants are also worth seeking. Referrals such as these are often a good place to start.

The traits of a good financial adviser are not unlike those of a good coach: this is a person with depth of knowledge in their field who will motivate, seek new information, educate, listen, communicate effectively, inspire, empower, display commitment and patience, emphasise goals and, above all else, help achieve results that may otherwise have been unobtainable

As with making any major decision, you should shop around and talk to a number of advisers before making a final selection.

Licensing and qualifications

Find someone who is licensed to give financial advice

In order to legally give financial advice one must hold an Australian financial services (AFS) licence.

When choosing your financial planner, make sure they have all the necessary skills and qualifications and they represent a reputable organisation, committed to servicing its clients' long-term needs. Consider the following criteria when choosing a financial planner:

The first and most important thing to look for when choosing a financial adviser is whether or not they have a financial service license (AFSL) or are an authorised representative of someone with a license.

Most representatives and small planning firms will fall under the license of a large financial institution such as a bank, and what they can advise on is tightly controlled by those institutions.

That is the main reason why the majority of financial planners do not advise on investment property strategies.

Smaller firms with their own AFSL have much more flexibility in their recommendation process and are not bound by such restrictions.

The main point to remember is to only deal with a licensed advisory business. The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) are responsible for all licensing within Australia.

A financial adviser will assess where you are financially and design a plan to help you meet your financial goals. A good adviser should look at the big picture, taking into consideration accounting, investing, tax, and insurance issues.

Finding a good financial adviser may seem as challenging as actually doing the investment research yourself. Brokerage firms, banks, accountants, certified financial planners, and managed fund companies are happy to offer advice and guidance at a price. Sifting through all of these options to choose a qualified planner you're comfortable with and that will look out for your interests will take some footwork, but don't make the mistake of trying to save time by picking an adviser from the phone book.

Know what you want to obtain from a financial adviser. This will be determined in part by the nature of your investments and other assets.

Know your risk tolerance level. Can you ride out the swings in the stock market and retain your sanity? Or will a downturn cause sleepless nights?

The interview process

During an interview with a potential adviser it is important for you to remember that you are in charge of making any decisions.

Do not allow anyone to force or pressure you into doing anything that you do not feel comfortable with or don't understand. It is important for you to understand that you will be hiring them to do an extremely important job for you, so you must ensure you are completely comfortable with the person you choose.

Use the list of prepared questions you have and listen to their responses. If you don't understand something, ask them to explain.

Sample list of questions

The following is a list of suggested questions you may wish to ask a potential adviser:

- Do you have a current financial services license?
- What is your level of experience and qualifications?
- What type of clients do you normally advise?
- How do you charge for your services?
- What are your areas of specialty?
- Do you advise on institutional type investments only, or are you able to also advise me on direct investments such as direct property?
- What level of control do you take in regards to the overall process, and how much do you get involved in the implementation phase?
- How do you do your research and how do you keep up to date professionally?
- How do you choose investment managers?
- How do you maintain an ongoing relationship with clients?
- What makes you different to other financial advisers?

At this point, you should also be provided with a Financial Services Guide (FSG). You may need to interview more than one person to establish whether they are the most suitable to work with you.

How much will it cost?

The final aspect in comparing potential advisers is price.

The cost to you will depend on the complexity of your investments and financial situation, as well as where you live and the fee method the planner uses.

By law, all advisers must disclose all forms of payment, upfront or ongoing fees, and commissions.

Many advisers will charge using one or a combination of these methods.

When comparing, it may help to get an example to help you understand the implications of the different methods. Potential advisers should be able to go through and explain these payments.

In addition, this information should also be made available in the Financial Services Guide (FSG) which, by law, must be presented to clients.

In any event, it is important to consider all of these aspects as well as reading any FSG before choosing a potential adviser.

Making your selection

Remember, maintaining an ongoing relationship with your adviser is critical.

As your guide they join you on your journey to achieving your financial dreams. A good financial adviser should be able to give you support and answer any questions that may arise along the way. Once again, drawing on the comparison of the relationship between a top athlete and their coach, we can see the journey travelled and the success achieved is made possible only by the combined and focused efforts of both parties.

It is important to understand that the financial environment is always changing and the rule books are always being revised and re-written.

In some cases, it may be crucial for a change in strategy if a particular event occurs or a new law is passed.

Detailed and regular reviews are key and, if maintained, both parties should be able to act swiftly and promptly to ensure ongoing financial and investment success.

After you have sorted through all the data as well as considered the individual adviser's approach and skills, you are ready to make your final choice.

You should now be able to make a well informed and confident selection and be assured that you have given yourself every chance to succeed in choosing a suitable adviser.

Take the next step

We trust you enjoyed this publication and

found it informative and professionally presented. Of course, your feedback is always welcome as we strive to continually offer content in a format that is relevant to you.

We now invite you to take the next step and meet with an adviser to discuss what it was you were hoping to achieve when you downloaded this handbook and to establish if we can help you achieve your goals and objectives.

Next you will find details on how to book an appointment with an adviser.

We look forward to meeting you soon.

Appointment booking request form

About the Adviser

Our services

Contact details

Please complete the Appointment Booking Request below and scan and email to:

____

Appointments are available Monday-to-Friday.

Please nominate your preferred day, date and time to meet with us. One of our client services representatives will call you to confirm your appointment.

Preferred appointment day and time

Day __________________________________

Date __________________________________

Time __________________ am/pm ________

If you would like us to contact you via email to confirm your appointment or to answer any questions you have, please provide a valid email address for our records.

Email __________________________________

Your Details

Title __________________________________

First name ______________________________

Last name ______________________________

Mobile _________________________________

Reader Notes

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Wealth Adviser

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