

# 30 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A FINANCIAL PLANNER



**Blossom Wealth Management**  
P.O. Box 125, Alamo, CA 94507  
[www.blossomwm.com](http://www.blossomwm.com)

Q1

## Where can I learn more about Blossom Wealth Management?

Answer

Let's have a conversation. This is the best way for you to discover our expertise, commitment and discretion. During a relaxed telephone, video or in person meeting, we will introduce you to several members of our team. We use this opportunity to listen to you and learn more about your specific circumstances, needs, and goals.

Q2

## How does Blossom Wealth Management differ from brokerage firms, trust companies, banks, and asset management firms?

Answer

Blossom seeks to align our financial interests with those of our clients. Blossom Wealth Management is independently owned and operated. Our main source of revenue has always been client fees. Blossom and/or its affiliated persons also earn insurance commissions when sold to our clients.

In addition, for those with more complex needs, our family office services offering provides the high-touch experience and resources you might expect to find in a private office serving an exceptionally wealthy family.

Q3

## What are your credentials?

Answer

George Salter has a BA and MBA from Dominican University of California; JD from the University of San Diego, School of Law; and CFP® designation from the College for Financial Planning. James Salter has a BA and MBA from Dominican University of California and also holds the designation of Accredited Investment Fiduciary or AIF®. Craig's education began at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. During his five years of college, he received two degrees, one in Financial Management as a B.S. and the other in Accounting from the Business School. Craig also has a Masters in Financial Services from Golden Gate University, he holds the CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ or CFP® designation and has completed the Chartered Financial Analyst designation or CFA®.

Q4

## If I choose to work with Blossom Wealth Management, how will my fee be determined?

Answer

We will meet with you to understand your current financial situation, goals and objectives. Following a review of your financial situation, we will jointly determine the scope of services required and the assets for which we will assume management responsibility. The fee schedule and services retainer for financial planning related services only will be determined accordingly.

**Q5**

## How are you compensated? How will I pay for your services?

**Answer** Blossom Wealth Management charges an annual fee for Investment Management Services. Our fees are based on a percentage of assets under management and the services provided. A client with \$250K would be charged \$4,375 annually. The fees are automatically withdrawn on a quarterly basis. Therefore, for the initial quarter only the amount would be calculated as follows:

$$0.0044 (1.75\%/4) \times \text{account value } (\$250k) = \$1093.75$$

**Q6**

## How will we work together? Will you be the only person working with me?

**Answer** The client advisor relationship includes working with George, James or Craig. The Blossom team works together to design portfolios, review asset allocation, monitor strategy implementation and execute retirement plans. We also benefit from a support team at Charles Schwab that assists advisers like ours with custodial back office services.

**Q7**

## Where will my assets be held? What financial institution(s) do you represent?

**Answer** Blossom Wealth Management is a registered investment adviser and completely independent. Our recommended custodian, who holds assets, is Charles Schwab & Co. They also provide statements, tax documents, and online access.

**Q8**

## What experience do you have?

**Answer** George began his career with Ameriprise Advisors a financial planning company in 2002. He then spent five years at wire-houses (Merrill Lynch and Smith Barney). Before that George worked at a gold mine in Africa and performed extensive research in behavioral finance during law school. James worked in a family office environment prior to partnering with George at Smith Barney. Craig Braemer worked at Fisher Investments, as an analyst. After six years, he joined a larger organization, Merus Capital Management, a division of Bank of California to improve his analytical skills and follow more specific industries. This firm, after several name changes, became HighMark Capital Management. It was owned by Union Bank and kept Craig busy for almost 24 years. During this time he was a Research Analyst, Assistant Fund Manager-HighMark Growth Fund, Portfolio Fund Manager-HighMark Growth Fund, Director of Investments, Senior Portfolio Manager and Investment Executive. During part of these 24 years, he also ran an investment strategy called Relative Dividend Yield for both institutional and high net worth clients of HighMark Capital Management.

**Q9**

## Do you provide a free initial consultation?

**Answer** Yes. We find it essential to interview prospective clients to ensure that we are a good fit for one another.

Q10

## What services do you provide? What are your specialties?

**Answer** We offer holistic wealth management strategies. Over the course of our relationship, we generally discuss financial planning, retirement goals, education planning, insurance needs, estate planning, portfolio management, and family values. We also specialize in the management and creation of individual stock investment strategies.

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Q11

## Why should I choose you as my financial advisor?

**Answer** You want someone you can trust. We are independently and objectively looking after your best interests. You also want someone with experience. Amongst our team, we have over 70 years of combined financial planning and investment experience. Another consideration is education. In total we have 12 years of post-high school education, including 5 graduate degrees. Lastly, we believe that you can benefit greatly from a Financial Planner.

We are committed to helping individuals, families, and organizations grow, utilize and protect their assets. We also provide guidance on the transfer of wealth to future generations.

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Q12

## What is your approach to financial planning?

**Answer** Blossom Wealth Management works with a variety of clients. We understand that risk tolerance and time frame vary from one person to the next. We learn about each client so that we can design customized portfolios. We educate our clients on the investment landscape and demonstrate how diversified holdings blend together to form a cohesive portfolio. All this is achieved through our five step financial planning process.

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Q13

## What is the profile of a “typical” Blossom Wealth Management client?

**Answer** Together we can determine whether our services are a good fit for you. By design, our business model allows us to work with individuals, families, and organizations across a broad wealth spectrum. Having the opportunity to meet you is the first step in establishing a mutually beneficial and, we hope, long-term relationship.

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Q14

## How many clients do you currently manage?

**Answer** We have over 175 clients.

Q15

**If you are going to manage my account, will you obtain my permission every time you buy or sell something?**

**Answer** Most of our clients grant us discretion to conduct transactions within predetermined guidelines and levels of risk. Other clients have concentrated positions or extraordinary circumstances that require an ad hoc approach to their portfolio management.

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Q16

**Do you offer any guaranteed results?**

**Answer** No. We educate our clients on historical returns and provide periodic reviews to make sure their portfolios not only reflect changes in their lives and economic circumstances but also their long-term goals.

Note: Investing in securities involves the loss of risk, and any past performance does not determine future results.

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Q17

**Could anyone besides me benefit from your recommendations?**

**Answer** If we determine that an insurance product is an appropriate part of implementing your plan, we will clarify exactly how commissions work on these ancillary products; whether we deploy them or partner with outside professionals.

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Q18

**Have you ever been publicly disciplined for any unlawful or unethical actions in your professional career?**

**Answer** There have been no disciplinary actions taken against George, James, Craig, or Blossom Wealth Management. Blossom Wealth Management is regulated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and can provide you with an ADV which shows that we have not been disciplined for any unlawful or unethical activities. Please visit <https://brokercheck.finra.org/> to check the background of investment professionals.

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Q19

**Does your firm have any quotas you have to meet?**

**Answer** No.

**Q20**

## How much risk should I be willing to take?

**Answer** This is a very personal decision. To answer this question, we would need to learn more about your family history, employment status, other income and resources, cash flow, and short-term needs, among other things.

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**Q21**

## How does Blossom Wealth Management work with my current Advisors (attorneys, CPAs, and other professionals)?

**Answer** You let us know how we can best work with your other advisors. Our goal is to build a strong relationship with your advisors in order to complement and enhance their work. In some cases, we may serve as your project manager to ensure that your advisors have timely and accurate information. In all cases, our job is to work together, provide context and obtain the benefit of their expertise. As your advisor, we will be in a position to anticipate issues and opportunities that can be referred to your tax advisor, lawyer or other service providers, for prompt consideration and resolution.

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**Q22**

## What percentage of assets can I withdraw from my portfolio in retirement?

**Answer** If you plan to retire in your 60s and your advisor responds with a recommended withdrawal rate higher than 5%, we believe that you should consider heading for the door. Numerous studies have shown that the withdrawal rate that would have survived any 30-year period over the past 130 or so years is just around 4%. We believe it is a safe withdrawal rate, some will argue that 5% is manageable if you can alter your lifestyle based on market conditions. In our judgement, anything higher is taking on a big risk that you'll outlive your money.

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**Q23**

## What is your approach to 401K plan rollovers?

**Answer** We educate our clients on their choices. Each has a different advantages and disadvantages in terms of investments, fees, withdrawal rules, required minimum distributions, taxes and protection from creditors. As you weigh the pros and cons of each approach, we can help you understand which possible course of action aligns with your retirement goals.

Q24

### Why should I roll over my 401K plan to your firm?

**Answer** We look at your rollover as a critical element of your entire financial picture. We educate you on how the various pieces fit together in a effort to help you sleep at night.

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Q25

### How long does the process of rolling over a 401K plan usually take?

**Answer** Between 7-14 business days.

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Q26

### Are you going to ask me about my debt?

**Answer** Yes. We believe a good financial plan includes a discussion of how much someone owes.

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Q27

### Can Blossom Wealth Management ensure discretion and confidentiality in managing my affairs?

**Answer** Your trust is paramount-trust in our knowledge, trust that your goals will become our goals and, above all, trust that your personal matters will be kept confidential. For more information on how we protect our clients' privacy and uphold their confidentiality, we invite you to review a copy of our Privacy Policy.

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Q28

### How much of your income do you need to replace in retirement?

**Answer** It's important to know how much income you will need during retirement. We believe guidelines about the percentage of income to replace in retirement are only starting points for projecting how much to save. The reality of retirement is that your needs - and associated costs - are unique and will change over time. It is our goal to help you determine what percentages will work for you.

Q29

## What is financial fitness?

**Answer** Financial Fitness seeks to align your cash flow, risk management, investment portfolio and estate plan. We believe that financial fitness and physical fitness are both critical to achieving wellness. Wellness, in turn, is critical for a successful retirement.

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Q30

## How do we begin working together?

**Answer** We have a conversation. If a good fit is determined, we transition the management of your financial affairs in accordance with your specific needs and expectations. We will dedicate as much time as your situation requires.

## Disclosure

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Blossom Wealth Management, LLC. is registered as an investment adviser with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Diversification does not guarantee a profit nor protect against loss. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

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