



## INTEGRATED WEALTH MANAGEMENT

— FORWARD THINKERS —

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### Who's Managing Your Money?

#### Navigating the changing paradigms in asset management program models

As the financial services marketplace shifts and evolves over time, it can become difficult to navigate your own best fit in terms of a service model for managing your investable assets. There are four primary models in which you can invest your assets.

The first is a large institutional asset management firm. The second is the bank model. The third is a large financial services organization. And the fourth is the independent model in which a private firm that is not affiliated with any financial services provider uses a brokerage house to clear their transactions.

Each of these models is a good fit for some families. Here are some questions to ask yourself and/or the firms you may be considering to help ensure you find the right fit for your circumstances:

- ◆ Do the firms offer proprietary investment products, externally manufactured products, or both?
- ◆ Who sets the global investment strategy for how your money is managed?
- ◆ Who provides product due diligence?
- ◆ In terms of services provided, is the advisor an asset manager? If so, who is handling the financial planning services you may need outside of the investment portion of your planning?
- ◆ Do the firms help you develop a written Investment Policy Statement? How often do they evaluate and update it?
- ◆ What is the core competency of each of the asset managers? Do their core competencies match the assets they're managing for you?



#### Additional Considerations

In addition to these questions, there are other key factors to consider. Take a look at the fees you're paying and determine whether they're competitive for the volume of assets being managed. Ask for full disclosure regarding fees and expenses. The advisor should be willing to provide full transparency. Ask some questions regarding the quality of technology the firm or institution has in place. Technology can affect the clarity and customization of your reporting, your ability to view your portfolio via the web, as well as internal efficiencies that impact the quality and timeliness of the service you receive.

#### Asset Management vs. Financial Planning

For an established family to plan well requires more than simply an estate planning attorney and an asset manager. Ask some tough questions about who does what on your planning team. If one of your current advisors offers financial planning, ask them to share their documented financial planning process. Ask about their training, expertise, and background as it relates to the planning discipline separate from the investment discipline. If there is a missing link here in the services you're receiving, ask your existing advisors for a referral to a full-service financial planner who can tie all of your affairs together.

*As usual, please feel free to contact us regarding this or other planning related issues.*

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