

Advisor Highlight Series

Featuring Adam Kazalski

The Advisor Highlight Series features the unique insights and successes of advisors who use the AssetMark platform. In this series, we sit down with advisors to get their professional views on practice management, industry trends, and what they have learned over the course of their work to help clients reach their personal and financial goals. We hope you enjoy this chance to learn from your peers!

[Adam Kazalski, CHFC and Founding Partner of FourFront Group, discusses the importance of a clear value proposition—and some of the obstacles that advisors at any stage of their career may encounter in refining this crucial element of their practice.](#)

1. What are the specific strategies you use to help clients see the value of your services?

We have a service model that we implemented with AssetMark's help, and also a trademarked process overview called Navigation for Wealth™. We put our process in place over the course of the last eight years; it's a custom planning procedure that allows clients to identify and organize their goals and priorities. Our overall process, service model and fee schedule will be published on our newly designed website for transparency, and are deliverable to new clients so they know what to expect.

2. Think back on how your value proposition has evolved—is there anything you'd change about the various ways you conveyed that value over the years?

Earlier on in my practice, I didn't convey my consultative and educational process well. I came to financial advising from the insurance side, and our communication was very transactional. We had been taught to sell insurance, even though we also educated clients, coordinated with attorneys, managed assets, and had family meetings...we never articulated that that was what we were doing. If I had to do it again, I'd have created a fee-based planning process from the get-go, charge a flat fee initially, and explain what we're doing—that's how I run my practice now.

3. What do you see as the biggest challenge for advisors trying to communicate their value proposition?

For new advisors, the issue is purely confidence, because they don't have enough experience. They may not yet have a value proposition that shows what they bring to the table and justifies their fee. To move past that, a younger advisor should be

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doing joint work or specialize in a specific area. That area can be as simple as fact-finding, number-crunching, or product-based work—whatever it is, they should work until they have great experience from sitting in on a longer history of client conversations.

For older advisors, the challenge is often fear-based. They have a tremendous skill set, but they may be afraid to make necessary changes. For example—they're afraid to have a transaction be fee-based, because they don't believe the client will actually pay the fee. However, my experience has been that when we position it the right way and articulate our business practice, clients respond, "Why haven't you been doing this for me earlier? We don't want to just buy a product—we want you to engage in our entire life."

AssetMark, Inc.

1655 Grant Street
10th Floor
Concord, CA 94520-2445
800-664-5345

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30134 | C122017 | 12/2017 | EXP 6/30/19