



Colin S. Ritchie



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why Pay For Financial Planning When I Can Get Work Done by My Insurance or Investment Advisor for “free.”**

My first response is that you probably don't get this advice for free and my second is that your financial future is too important to leave to the cheapest bidder. Sometimes good advice may appear to cost a little more but I hope that paying a bit more now can save you a lot of money and problems later. The benefits of working with me are as follows:

- I get paid by the hour or a flat fee and am working only for you. You will also know exactly what I get paid because you are the only one paying me to help you. Unlike most investment and insurance advisors (most of whom I have great respect for), I don't get paid by commission by the companies whose products you buy. I strive to give you unbiased advice that I hope will pay for itself many times over.
- Many ‘free’ plans focus primarily on insurance or investments and may only provide basic information on other aspects of financial planning. Some of these other areas, like tax and estate planning, can make a huge difference to you and your families futures, and may be neglected in free plans.
- I have combination of education and experience that I believe are hard to match.
- I have no incentive to suggest more insurance or investment products than you actually need and may be able to suggest cost effective alternatives.
- I am not tied to a single company's product lines.

### **Why Work With A Financial Planner that Can't Sell Me Investments or Insurance?**

Although I don't sell these products, I actually see this as an advantage because:

- I can focus on the areas of financial planning and law that I enjoy rather than deal with the administrative nightmare that goes with selling products. That leaves me more time to do what I enjoy and do best.
- You don't have to worry about being pressured to buy these products from me.
- I can be flexible. I am happy to work with you if you want to manage these affairs on your own or are tickled pink with your existing investment or insurance advisors, as I am happy to work with anyone already on your team. On the other hand, if you are not so pleased, I can refer you to qualified experts who can focus on these areas.
- Working with me does not have to be a long-term commitment. If you want, I can simply advise you on selected issues with no strings attached. You decide how often and how long we work



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together, as well as where we focus. There will never be that awkward conversation at a later date if you want to transfer your investments, as I will never have managed them in the first place.

I also want to assure that I do have extensive experience making insurance and investment recommendations, as detailed later on this page.

### **What is Your Background?**

- I have practiced as a lawyer for approximately 12 years and as a financial planner for about 10 years. In addition to remaining a practicing lawyer, I am a member of the Tax Law Section and Wills and Estates Section of the Canadian Bar Association.
- I have 3 separate Financial Planning Designations. I am a CFP (Certified Financial Planner), a CLU (Certified Life Underwriter, which is a speciality dealing with life insurance, tax and small business planning) and FMA (Financial Management Advisor, as awarded by the Canadian Securities Institute and includes specialized planning for high net worth individuals). All of these designations require extensive study and the first 2 have extensive ongoing professional development requirements.
- My past experience as a Director of Financial Planning for a major Canadian life insurance company required me to travel throughout B.C. to work with insurance and investment advisors and their top clients to prepare extensive financial plans that included insurance and investment recommendations.
- I also provided regular personal and team training seminars to insurance and investment advisors, as well as assisting advisors from all over the province on a daily basis on pretty much any financial planning issue you could imagine.
- I was also in charge of researching, writing and editing financial planning articles that could be used across Canada.
- I am used to working with clients' lawyers and accountants to help integrate my recommendations and am pretty good at conversing in both legalese and accountant-speak.
- Through my law background and past work experience, I have experience both writing and reviewing Wills and other legal documents.

### **What Can You Do For Me?**

People are not cookie cutter shapes. I promise to work with you to meet your specific goals and needs in a way that works best for you. For some clients, this can mean using me as a resource from time to time on specific issues or for a general review every few years. In the meantime, they follow up on any



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recommendations on their own. Other clients may prefer me to play a more active role, especially when we first start working together and we need to make significant changes. This can come in many forms, such as drafting your Will or other estate-planning documents, consulting with other experts on your team and helping educate you on the areas of financial planning you want to focus on so that you can assume more control over your financial affairs going forward.

**What Can I Do to Learn More About Financial Planning? Do You Plan on Teaching any Financial Planning Courses?**

I have a useful links section on my website that may lead you to some of the answers that you seek. I am also planning on developing seminars on selected financial planning topics that I will present in person or via webinars. While I will offer some of these for free, I also plan on offering a series of paid seminars over a set period to help educate people on financial planning in way that won't break the bank. You will have a choice of paying for individual seminars or purchasing a package.

**Are You Willing to Work with Groups rather than Just Couples or Individuals?**

Definitely. I will work with two couples or up to four individuals for \$250 per hour tax and with larger groups for \$300 per hour plus HST.