

“MY JOB IS TO BE YOU.”

Fiduciary maverick Jeremy Walker

“Clarity, Education, and Progress” is the mantra of Maverick Wealth Management, a member of a Registered Investment Advisory firm based in Burleson, Texas. The firm, located just outside of Fort Worth, is a place where clients are comfortable discussing their personal goals, hopes, and challenges.

Communication is an essential part of the Maverick experience which includes a holistic and customized approach to investment planning that aligns with a client’s vision for his or her future.



“We chose the name Maverick for one reason. It’s someone who doesn’t follow the masses,” said Jeremy J. Walker, CRPC, AWMA, president of Maverick Wealth Management. “For us, as a tactical firm who favors contrarian-style investments, it’s a really good fit for our approach of relationships over profitability, and compassion

over firm growth. We’ve got the awards to confirm our business success, but that’s not what matters to us, it’s the people that matter to us.”

Separating from the Pack

Today’s investment arena is a place of heightened transparency, changing suitability standards, and ongoing innovation says Walker. “What we notice is missing is emphasis on



relationships,” he said. “We live in this world of robots and technology, but we believe that the most valuable piece is caring about the people.”

Within the financial industry, “the fact that it is an individual-based business has diminished,” he continued. “This is about people, and if we lose that track and we forget that each person is different, and their level of understanding is different, then we’re missing the boat.”

Expanding on his philosophy, Walker believes that client relationships are built through a respect for people as individuals and a dedication to client education, not by grouping clients as a whole and doling out cookie-cutter investment solutions.

“Education is, in our opinion, one of the most important pieces of the relationship because it allows the client to understand what we’re doing and why we’re

doing it,” he said. “By educating clients throughout our relationship, it helps them to better handle market downturns and unexpected events. Through it all, if the proper expectations were set, and the proper education was delivered, often the emotional competency raises for those people.”

For instance, in his relationship-based approach to advising, Walker often learns that his clients are concerned about leaving a legacy for their family. So, he encourages what he calls “generational planning” where they meet with the children of their clients to help them start their financial planning early in life.

“Einstein said ‘the greatest invention ever is compound interest.’ The sooner we can get people making the right decisions and allowing those decisions to compound for their own betterment, the better chance we have at the end of the game,” Walker said.

Relationships Work Both Ways

To establish the foundation of a client relationship, and to illustrate his role as a fiduciary, Walker tells his clients, “My job is to be you as much as I can be – with your understanding and your knowledge. If I were you – with your goals, your risk tolerances, and your concerns – what would I do?”

Acknowledging that there’s a lot of different ways that people learn, Walker says that educating clients is an important part of providing a fiduciary experience to ensure that they have sufficient, if not significant, understanding of products, market fundamentals, and risk associated with various investment strategies. Fee disclosure is also important to discuss with clients Walker says, as it promotes transparency.

Additionally, he takes the time to explain basic industry nuances to ensure clients and prospective clients have a full understanding of who they are working with.

“There is a misconception within our industry that is widespread, people don’t understand the



difference between an advisor, a planner, and a wealth manager," said Walker. "Aren't you all the same thing?" he often hears people ask. So, he understands the current effort of the Department of Labor to enforce regulations to require all financial advisory professionals working in any capacity to be held to a fiduciary standard – meaning they must always serve the best interests of their clients.

"Instituting this standard will provide a concept of unity in the industry where people can have some confidence that, no matter who they see, there is a legal requirement for the financial professional to do what's right and in the client's best interest," he said.

Just as it is important for an advisor to understand the client on an individual basis, it is important for the client to understand the advisor. Walker suggests that there are important questions to ask a financial professional before entrusting their finances to them. Experience, investment philosophy, and fee structure make the top of the list, along with inquiring whether the advisor has any limitations, fines, or sanctions.

"A prospective advisor should also be asked about their market exit strategy within their portfolio strategy. And the flip side is also true, what is an advisor's market entry plan? How are we putting money into the market? Are we buying everything today, or are we going to dollar cost average it in?" he said.

Uniquely, Walker suggests each investor ask themselves "what is your risk transfer strategy." Walker then suggests if you don't have one, or know what one is, then you should consider meeting with a professional to help design one. Walker comments, "At this stage of the market cycle it could potentially be the most crucial decision an investor can make."

However, to understand what motivates an advisor, Walker recommends asking the advisor a simple, straightforward question that trumps them all: "Why are you in this industry?"

"Competency and education are important, but truthfulness and trustworthiness are the backbone of every relationship," he said, stating what he felt clients look for in an advisor. In fact, he credits the latter

in helping to build Maverick Wealth Management.

Advice that Shaped the Advisor

Walker grew up on a dairy farm in North Texas. It was hard work with little reward – his family made just enough money to get by. As a competitive athlete in high school, he saw that the parents of his teammates were able to afford to pay for club sports activities, while he had to work to earn the money to participate.

"I knew at an early age I had to do something. I either had to play pro ball, or I had to get good at managing money." While pursuit of his baseball career was sidelined by injury in college, something his grandfather told him when he was young stuck with him: "There would always be a need for money and people to manage money," said the elder.

"Year over year, our biggest goal at Maverick Wealth Management is to cultivate and grow the relationships that we have. Our mission is to create a guide map towards our clients' financial future," said Walker. "Most mission statements for businesses are growth or company focused. Our business engagement as a whole puts our clients first. We take care of our clients the right way – we call it the Maverick way, and the business will take care of itself in the end," he said.

For more information on Maverick Wealth Management, LLC visit: maverick-wealth.org



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