

# *A Word About Registered Investment Advisory Firms*

There are many types of Registered Investment Advisers (RIA's) and each may operate differently. Some simply charge a fee for advice, some charge an advisory fee and then directly manage your investments, and some charge an advisory fee and utilize affiliated, professional money managers, while others may choose a combination of these methods.

No matter what type of RIA you decide might be helpful to assist you with your financial planning and investments, they all are held to a fiduciary standard of client care. Fiduciaries are required by the law to put your interests ahead of their own or any firm.

While finding a firm or individual who is a fiduciary should be one of your primary considerations, finding one that goes the extra mile might be an even better choice. Whichever firm will directly manage your investable assets should also have ongoing, *independent appraisals* of its best practices.

Those who have worked in manufacturing and engineering fields are probably familiar with the **ISO 9000** certification.

**ISO 9000** is a quality management standard that is awarded to companies who have met or surpassed guidelines intended to increase business efficiency and customer satisfaction. The goal of **ISO 9000** is to embed a quality management system within an organization, increasing productivity, reducing unnecessary costs, and ensuring quality of processes and products.

The **Centre for Fiduciary Excellence** or **CEFEX** certification is awarded to firms who have been audited and found to meet or surpass similar fiduciary standards as they are applied to Registered Investment Advisory companies.

A CEFEX-certified Investment Advisory firm has demonstrated that it has the best fiduciary practices in place. This means the firm has sound investment processes which are documented and therefore consistent. Investors, donors, and retirement plan sponsors who use CEFEX-certified Advisors have selected trustworthy organizations which are dedicated to safeguarding their clients' best interests by finding the most appropriate products at the best price.

CEFEX is an independent global assessment and certification organization. Its certification helps to determine the trustworthiness of your investment fiduciary.

CEFEX provides an independent recognition of a fiduciary firm's conformity to a defined Standard of Practice. Such adherence to best practices gives such a firm a better position to earn the public's trust.

CEFEX certification establishes transparency and accountability.

There are currently (as of January, 2016) only 79 CEFEX-certified Investment Advisory Firms out of thousands of registered advisory firms.

Given the current atmosphere of investor anxiety, people are looking for proof of investment managers' integrity and therefore such firms need to demonstrate that their trust is warranted.



*Investment Advisory Services are offered through Wealth Financial Advisory Services, LLC and Savant Capital Management, LLC. Savant Capital Management is a CEFEX Certified investment advisory firm.*