

# 10 CFP Questions

---

## 1. WHAT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

Financial Life Advisors (FLA) has been in business as a Registered Investment Adviser since 2003. In 2017 Cross Financial Services merged with Financial Life Advisors. Cross Financial Services had been continual operations since 1993.

### **KIRK W. FRANCIS, CFP® , AIF®**

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professional
- Over 35 years of experience in investments, retirement plans, and insurance,
- Chairman of Financial Planning Association's National Committee on Tax and Retirement
- Contributing Author to Prudent Practices for Fiduciary Advisers, FPA press 2007

### **BENJAMIN D. GURWITZ, CFP®**

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professional
- Over 15 years of experience in investments, insurance, and retirement plans
- Chairman (2015) Financial Planning Association of San Antonio & South Texas
- Board of Governors (2012-2015) for the San Antonio Estate Planners Council

### **SALBADOR B. CADENA, CFP®**

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professional
- Over 14 years of experience in investments, insurance, and retirement plans
- Professional Educator for 15 years

## 2. WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS?

Kirk holds the following designations:

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™
- Accredited Investment Fiduciary®

Ben holds the following designations:

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Sal holds the following designations:

- CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. owns the certification marks CFP®, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and federally registered CFP (with flame design) in the U.S., which it awards to individuals who successfully complete CFP Board's initial and ongoing certification requirements.

Once you have been authorized to use the CFP® marks, you must meet CFP Board's renewal standards to continue to use them. You must keep current with the annual certification fee and

*Last updated Feb-17*

complete the continuing education (CE) requirement every two years. In order to position you in the correct period, your initial continuing education (CE) requirement and certification fee are prorated.

The Accredited Investment Fiduciary® (AIF®) designation represents a thorough knowledge of and ability to apply the fiduciary Practices. AIF® designees have a reputation in the industry for the ability to implement a prudent process into their own investment practices as well as being able to assist others in implementing proper policies and procedures. (AIF®) Training is the best way for investment fiduciaries to absorb the Prudent Practices, their legal underpinnings and how to apply them within existing fiduciary policies and procedures. Through the AIF program participants, learn to: articulate the basis for, and benefits of, fiduciary standards of excellence; identify when an individual or organization may be deemed to have fiduciary status; identify the legal standards that require fiduciaries to prudently manage investment decisions; apply the practices that define a prudent investment process for Investment Stewards and Advisors and recognize the Practices for and Investment Managers. A proctored final exam is required as well as an adherence to the ethical standards and continuing education are required to maintain the designation <http://www.fi360.com/main/about.jsp>

### **3. WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER?**

We help clients navigate the complex landscape of personal finance. We assist with investment selection & management, risk mitigation through insurance & entity structure, income & estate tax planning and retirement planning and projections.

We specialize in the integration of tax and investment planning. Our investment strategy revolves around low cost index investing with tax efficient asset allocation. We take this planning a step further by preparing 20 year tax projections, maximizing the tax benefits of Roth conversions, Social Security and retirement account required distributions to minimize the tax burden over many years.

We believe reducing investment and tax costs adds far more value than pursuit of the next great thing. Saving money on transactions, investment management costs and taxes is measurable and significant. Reaching for above average returns is not.

### **4. WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO FINANCIAL PLANNING?**

We believe financial planning is a holistic and ongoing process. We like to begin all client relationships with a comprehensive financial plan. Going through a complete financial inventory and planning for the future brings everyone onto the same page. If one area is inconsistent with your goals, we identify the conflict and walk with you to make sure all areas work together towards your personal goals. We allow your situation and financial plan to lead us to the remedy. Financial products are the last aspect we address in your plan. Our firm is Fee-Only, No Commissions, PERIOD!

We use the 6 steps of Financial Planning prescribed by the CFP® Board.

1. Establish the relationship.
2. Gather your data and develop your financial goals
3. Analyze and evaluate your financial status
4. Develop recommendations
5. Implement recommendations

*Last updated Feb-17*

6. Monitor your progress against the financial goals you established

### **5. WILL YOU BE THE ONLY PERSON WORKING WITH ME?**

We utilize a team approach to make sure there is redundancy and consistency for clients. We have administrative staff, para-planners and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professionals working together.

- Kirk W. Francis, CFP®
- Ben Gurwitz, CFP®
- Sal Cadena, CFP®

### **6. HOW WILL I PAY FOR YOUR SERVICES?**

FLA offers its services on a Fee-Only basis. This means we only receive compensation directly from our clients and always send an invoice of exactly what we are being paid. Our fees are structured as hourly and/or fixed fees, as well as fees based upon assets under management. It depends on which services you utilize and your particular situation. In all cases you will know your exact fee schedule in advance of any engagement.

### **7. HOW MUCH DO YOU TYPICALLY CHARGE?**

For stand along comprehensive financial plans, the cost is generally from \$2,000 to \$8,000 depending on time and complexity. If you subsequently hire us for your asset management, we offset 50% of the financial planning fee against our ongoing management fees. Hourly rates for team members vary from \$100 - \$400 depending on credentials and experience.

For asset management, we have a \$500,000 minimum and we aggregate all accounts in one household for billing purposes.

<b>Portfolio Value</b>	<b>Annually</b>
First \$500,000	1.25%
Next \$500,000	0.90%
Next \$1,000,000	0.65%
Next \$3,000,000	0.50%
Remaining Assets above \$5,000,000	0.30%

### **8. COULD ANYONE BESIDES ME BENEFIT FROM YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS?**

Any other professional with whom you do business based on our recommendations will benefit. Our firm does not pay for referrals, give payment for referrals, nor accept payment for referrals to others.

We do recommend the use of TD Ameritrade Institutional for discount brokerage services. We do not participate in any of the commissions from trading activities we direct there for clients, but TD Ameritrade receives a benefit. They provide us with technology and investment research at no cost as a Registered Investment Adviser utilizing their platform.

### **9. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN PUBLICLY DISCIPLINED FOR ANY UNLAWFUL OR UNETHICAL ACTIONS IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER?**

No. None of our Investment Advisor Representatives have any disciplinary history. You can verify this information with the following bodies.

- [Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc.](#)
  - 800-487-1497 • [www.CFP.net/search](http://www.CFP.net/search)
- [Financial Industry Regulatory Authority](#)
  - 800-289-9999 • [www.finra.org](http://www.finra.org)
- [Securities and Exchange Commission](#)
  - 800-732-0330 • [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)

#### **10. CAN I HAVE IT IN WRITING?**

Yes. Financial Life Advisors provides its [Disclosure Brochure](#) on our website and prior to any engagement as well as annual notice of an material changes.

All engagements are in writing.