

THE PINNACLE

FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS



THE SECRET TO ACHIEVING YOUR LIFE'S GOALS

Most people assume that financial planning is primarily about money management. But that's like saying a cross-country family vacation is primarily about learning to read a map. In truth, financial planning involves deciding what kind of life you want for you and your family, and determining what decisions you need to make to get there.

Unfortunately, the financial world is growing increasingly complex, and it's becoming almost impossible to navigate without a guide. There is little margin for error, and a single mistake can cost you and your family dearly. You have worked hard and sacrificed much to get where you are today — the last thing you want to do is waste all of it by making the wrong financial decisions.

That's where we can help.

THE BENEFITS OF FINANCIAL PLANNING

PLANNING YOU CAN TRUST

Comprehensive Financial Planning

Unlike many firms, Pinnacle Advisory Group offers complete financial planning service, so you'll never need to worry that some aspect of your financial life is being neglected. Our services include, but are not limited to, retirement planning, tax planning, educational planning, charitable planning, small business planning and exit strategies, estate planning, insurance analysis, debt refinancing and analysis, stock option planning, etc.

No Additional Fees

Unlike other private wealth management firms, Pinnacle typically offers our financial planning services for no additional fee when a client engages us to manage his or her assets. We do that because we believe making decisions about investment policy in the context of a complete financial plan is the best way to ensure our clients are pleased with the performance of their investment portfolios. We do offer financial planning services to clients who do not choose to have us manage their portfolios, for a separate fee.

Always Acting in Your Best Interest

As bearers of the prestigious CFP® designation, our wealth managers are held to a fiduciary standard. That means they are required to advise and act in the best interests of their clients, regardless of whether something happens to be in their own best interests.

Fiscal decisions are often made without an understanding of one's complete financial situation, and that can lead to major -- sometimes irreversible -- mistakes. A Pinnacle wealth manager will give you the big picture view of your finances so you can make informed decisions about your future.

But that's not the only benefit to financial planning...

Planning Can Give You More Free Time

While it's possible to find the answers to some financial questions on the Internet, it's a risky and time-consuming choice. Why gamble your future on the reliability of something you read online? And considering how busy you already are, do you really want to spend your time re-searching obscure financial issues? Led by industry guru Michael Kitces, Pinnacle's wealth managers are experts in the field. With their long experience and shared knowledge, there is no financial problem that they haven't already faced and solved. Why not leave your fiscal concerns to them, and spend the time you save doing what you enjoy?

Planning Can Give You Peace of Mind

As your net worth and income grows, so do the implications of the financial decisions you make. Making wise fiscal choices can be stressful -- a single mistake can put your future plans out of reach. Pinnacle's wealth managers can free you from the anxiety over making a bad decision about your financial life.

Planning Can Give You A More Harmonious Family Life

Conflict over finances is the number one reason marriages break down. The financial planning process can provide a safe environment for couples to discuss their finances. Often one or both spouses don't understand a specific financial question. With a Pinnacle wealth manager leading the process, those flash points can often be resolved before they lead to marital stress.

CUTTING EDGE FINANCIAL PLANNING



Michael Kitces
Partner
Director of Research

Every industry has its stars — those individuals who not only distinguish themselves as experts, but whose thought leadership actually transforms their professions. In the world of financial planning, **Michael Kitces, CFP®, MSFS, MTAX, CLU®, ChFC®, RHU®, REBC®, CASL®** is one such person.

Financial Planning magazine labeled him the industry's "Deep Thinker," and in 2010, the Financial Planning Association honored him with the Heart of Financial Planning Award — the industry's greatest recognition. While generally given as a life-time achievement award, Michael won it at the age of 33.

A popular speaker, he is also the co-author of *The Annuity Advisor* and *Tools & Techniques of Retirement Income Planning*, and appears regularly in *The Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, *Investment News*, the *Journal of Financial Planning*, *Financial Planning* magazine, *Financial Advisor* magazine, *Kiplinger*, *Money*, *SmartMoney.com*, and the *Financial Post*. In May 2012, the prestigious *Journal of Financial Planning* named him the publication's first Practitioner Editor.

With Michael as both a partner and Director of Research, Pinnacle clients benefit from his cutting edge financial planning research long before the rest of the industry catches on. Our individual Wealth Managers use his work to guide their own planning, and consult with him directly when a client is facing an unusual financial problem.

This commitment to innovative, research-based financial planning provides our clients with strategies and techniques that may take years for the rest of the industry to adopt.

For example...

Safe Withdrawal Rates

Retired Americans who rely on their portfolios in retirement face an important challenge: How do you know how much money you can withdraw each year without taking so much that you run out of your assets early?

Planners have been researching safe withdrawal rates for years, with most concluding that 4% was a good rule of thumb. Michael's cutting edge research moved the debate past the old assumptions when he demonstrated that safe withdrawal rates are actually tied to market valuations. If markets are undervalued, then your withdrawal rate can be higher; if they are overvalued, the withdrawal rates have to be lower. Pinnacle's Wealth Managers use Michael's groundbreaking research when they determine withdrawal rates for their own clients.

Tax Location

We use specialized portfolio management software that we spent a year helping to design that enables us to manage each client's portfolio with extreme tax efficiency. We treat each total portfolio as if it were one large account. All of your assets remain exactly where they always have been, of course, but our software gives us the ability to place your most tax efficient assets in your taxable accounts and the most tax inefficient in your tax deferred or tax free accounts. In doing so, we're able to minimize your taxes and significantly enhance your long term wealth creation.

Tax Sequencing

Simply put, tax sequencing is the art of determining which account to take money from in the withdrawal stage. This varies greatly by individual, and is based on a person's annual income and personal tax rates.

Getting started is **easier** than you think.

People often hesitate to enlist a financial planner, because they dread the idea of having to gather all the necessary financial and legal documents. At Pinnacle, we've made the process easy.

Your Pinnacle wealth manager will walk you through the information collection process, and will tell you exactly what you need (and often, where to find it).

We've been doing this a long time, and have developed tips, shortcuts, and strategies over the years to make the process as painless as possible.

After all, that's why we're here.



A BETTER FINANCIAL PLANNING EXPERIENCE

Recently, when an industry opinion researcher asked his focus group how they would describe the financial planning experience, they told him it was “a mix between a dental visit, math class, and marriage therapy.”

Unfortunately, when it comes to most planners, they're right. With its combination of endless document hunting and long, jargon-filled meetings, the standard planning process can be miserable for the client. That's a

shame, and it prevents a lot of people who desperately need a planner from ever enlisting one.

But it doesn't have to be that way. At Pinnacle, our all-star team of Wealth Managers have streamlined the process, to minimize the difficult parts of planning and improve the overall experience for our clients. We've worked hard to make sure Pinnacle's financial planning process is efficient, non-intimidating, and client friendly.

With Most Financial Planners...

Clients are required to hunt down reams of financial information on their own, before a planner will even look at their situation.

Clients are forced to sit through long meetings filled with indecipherable industry jargon. As a result, they leave feeling frustrated and in-the-dark regarding their finances.

Clients must be on guard as their advisor tries to sell them insurance, annuities, or some other product they don't really need.

Clients feel judged and treated like children because they don't know all the details of their financial situation.

Planners are forced to handle both their clients' investments and their financial planning, which means they cannot devote their full attention to either.

At Pinnacle Advisory Group...

Your Wealth Manager will walk you through the information collection process, and will tell you exactly what you need (and often, where to find it). We've been doing this a long time and have developed shortcuts, tips, and strategies to make the process as painless as possible.

Your Wealth Manager will speak to you in plain English. After all, your planner should be someone who helps you get a better idea of what you need to do to reach your financial goals, and not someone who talks to you as if you were a math student.

We bear the prestigious CFP® designation, so our Wealth Managers are held to a fiduciary standard. That means they are required to advise and act in the best interests of their clients. We don't sell or benefit from the sale of any product, so our clients can trust that our financial recommendations are completely objective.

We understand that most people don't have the time or interest in becoming experts in finance. That's why we're here, after all! Instead of being judged, we believe that those who seek out financial planning should be congratulated for taking a positive step toward financial health.

Because we have an independent Investment Team to handle all our client portfolios, your Wealth Manager can focus completely on you and your financial needs. That's a level of personalized attention few firms can match.

THE BEST TEAM IN THE BUSINESS

Pinnacle Advisory Group has assembled a veritable all-star team of professional Wealth Managers, with experience that goes well beyond what you'll find at a run-of-the-mill firm. They've come to financial planning from a variety of fields: law, accounting, psychology, economics, auditing — even chemistry. While the Wealth Managers work with their own individual clients, they meet together regularly to discuss questions that arise with specific cases. As a result, the Pinnacle client benefits both from the personal attention of his or her own planner, and from the combined wisdom and experience of the entire team.

Not only that, but our advisors are also backed up by Pinnacle's Investment Team, which researches and invests all client portfolios, and our Operations Team,

which handles all of the administrative issues. As a result of this team approach, our wealth managers are focused entirely on delivering creative and effective financial solutions to our clients. Of course, every team needs a captain, and we have the best in the industry — our Director of Research, Michael Kitces.

With our team of experts looking after your finances, you'll no longer have to watch the market's ups and downs, or worry that your future plans are dissolving along with the economy. You can be free to enjoy the things that really matter to you — family and friends, a beloved hobby, a political cause, or your favorite charity.

Life is too short to spend worrying about money. With our help, you won't have to.



Michael Kitces, CFP®, MSFS, MTAX, CLU®, ChFC®, RHU®, REBC®, CASL®



David Kauffman, J.D., CFP®



Deb Kriebel, MBA, CFP®



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William Bissett, CFP®



Jake Mason, CFP®



Mindy Gasthalter, MBA, CFP®



Gabriel Trasatti, CPA, PFS



Michael Green, Jr., J.D., CFP®, CTFA



Jeff Troll, CPA, CFA, CFP®



You have dreams...

Goals you want to achieve... places you hope to go... things you want to do... people you yearn to spend time with.

These dreams have motivated you over the years to work hard and to sacrifice, so that one day you would be in the financial position to live the life you've always wanted. But you're not there yet. Achieving your dreams takes more than work and sacrifice... it also takes planning and the knowledge of how to get there.

At Pinnacle Advisory Group, we are experts at helping affluent people like you accomplish their life goals. Whether you want to spend your future retirement...

- ...traveling the world with your spouse...
- ...spending more time on hobbies like photography, or wine collecting, or cooking...
- ...living on a horse ranch in the country or a cabin in the mountains...
- ...creating a lasting legacy for your children and grandchildren...
- ...supporting the charities and causes that you hold dear...

Or even if you just want to have the money and guidance right now to do the things that are important to you, we can help.

You see, at Pinnacle, we combine both expert investment management with personalized, unbiased financial planning. We don't think you can separate the two.

After all, what's the point of securing your financial health if you can't do what you want with it? And what's the use of creating a plan to achieve your dreams if you lack the financial means to get you there?

In 1993, our founders started Pinnacle with the goal of creating the perfect financial advisory firm — the kind of place they themselves would feel safe entrusting their own money and future. We think they succeeded. Over the years, Pinnacle has developed a proprietary investment system — the “Pinnacle Investment Method” — along with an independent team that does nothing but analyze the markets and manage our clients' portfolios. At the same time, we have assembled an all-star group of wealth managers who devote all of their attention to individual clients, helping them plan for their future and achieve their life goals.

While large financial advisory companies also have separate investment departments, they lack the personalized attention of a smaller firm. At the same time, small advisories have the personal service, but lack a full-time investment team — advisors are forced to split their attention between serving clients and monitoring the markets.

Here at Pinnacle, we have the best of both worlds. And we'd like to put that to work for you.

If you have a minimum of \$750,000 in investable assets and would like to arrange an introductory meeting with one of our wealth managers, email Brian Saint-Paul at bsaintpaul@pinnacleadvisory.com or phone him at (410) 995-6630.