Stairstep Questions

For Wealth Advisors*

To make your client and prospect meetings the most effective they can be, you need to go beyond traditional fact-finding and ask feeling-based questions. These types of questions allow you to connect with people and help build trust, rapport, and loyal relationships. These questions can be used in an initial prospect meeting.

The second question in this Stairstep process can also be used to answer the age-old question, "What do you do for a living?" Once you are asked this question, respond with, "I can most effectively answer that question with a question. What would you most like to develop, improve, or change about your financial life?" After an answer is provided, you respond with, "That is what I do." The majority of the time, the response received will fit this script.

Use these questions during the initial meeting with a prospect.

The "Zen" Opening

» Mr. Jones, I'd like to really know more about your situation to know if it would make sense for us to work together. Is it okay if I ask some additional questions?

Identify What's Most Important

Assist them to identify what's most important to them by asking about a situation they would like to improve.

» First, Mr. Jones, if you could develop, improve, or change your wealth planning or wealth management in any area, what would you choose?

» How do you know this is an area you need to improve or change?

» Please tell me about the last time something happened that made you realize this was an area you needed to improve or change. What happened? How did you feel?

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Increase Motivation

Assist them to increase their motivation by understanding the implications of not changing.

» What happens if there is no improvement in this area?

» Think five years into the future. I want you to visualize for a moment what it will look like if you make no changes. Please describe that for me.

Assist Them to Create a Compelling Future

» Suppose you could turn this area around. What would that mean to you?

» What would be important about that to you?

The Confirmation Question

» Mr. Jones, for the benefit of our existing clients at Carson Wealth, we only accept a limited number of new clients each year. We do that for two reasons. First of all, A) our loyalty is to our existing clients and we make sure we're satisfying their needs before we attempt to grow, and B) we want to make sure we can add value for anybody we decide to work with. You're interviewing us for a long-term relationship. We also interview potential clients. The great news is that, based on what you shared with me, I think we can not only improve your current wealth planning situation, but, also, we will proactively continue to improve it throughout our relationship.

» What additional information do you need from me so we can start this process?

*These questions were based on original content from Doug Carter and used with his permission.

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