



## **THE DISTELFINK – Philosophy, Business Practice and Pricing**

March 5, 2009

When I thought about starting my own business I wanted to do something that built on my own strengths, interests and experience, but also brought a fresh, new approach to the practice of wealth management. I wanted to re-think services offered and pricing. I wanted to create a collaborative experience for clients founded on an exchange of information – the client’s circumstances and goals for my knowledge and recommendations. I also wanted to ensure that the client would feel more positive, empowered and inspired for the process they would experience with Weightman Wealth Advisory. So what does all this mean?

It means we don’t take custody of the assets we oversee with our clients, nor do we place trades, select managers, or calculate performance. We don’t write wills or prepare tax returns. We don’t sell products with hidden or embedded fees like insurance policies, annuities or mutual funds. We don’t charge commissions or assets under management fees.

So what do we do? We try to make the process of wealth management more approachable for our clients. We know that most of them would rather be doing a thousand other things than thinking about investment returns, optimizing portfolios and the latest tax minimizing estate planning technique. But we actually find these topics fascinating and we want to share our fundamental knowledge about them with others. Therefore, we make sure that every client understands what they are investing in and why. We help set asset allocations that position a portion of the investments for the long term while also ensuring that short term needs are being met. We help explain estate planning strategies and existing trust agreements. We review insurance coverages and confirm that they still make sense, given the client’s current circumstances. We help with budgeting and the optimal way to source funds to meet that budget. We look for ways to cut current expenses – especially those related to managing your financial circumstances – and ways to enhance your returns. We would like the opportunity to analyze and evaluate what you have in place to determine what is working well, and where we think we could add value. And lastly, we want to earn a place on your team of advisors as the generalist, who coordinates and communicates with everyone, as needed.

And how will we earn our keep? By charging an hourly rate for our services and advice. Or in those cases that we come to know very well and offer long-term ongoing services, we charge an annual retainer, or fixed fee arrangement. By taking this compensation approach it will limit the number of clients we can serve. However, we care more about working with a relatively small group of individuals and families, doing a great job, and making a meaningful difference in their financial lives, than having a large, impersonal practice. We will use The Distelfink to communicate with a wider audience, while we keep our actual advisory practice to a manageable size. This is the balance we will strive to maintain.

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