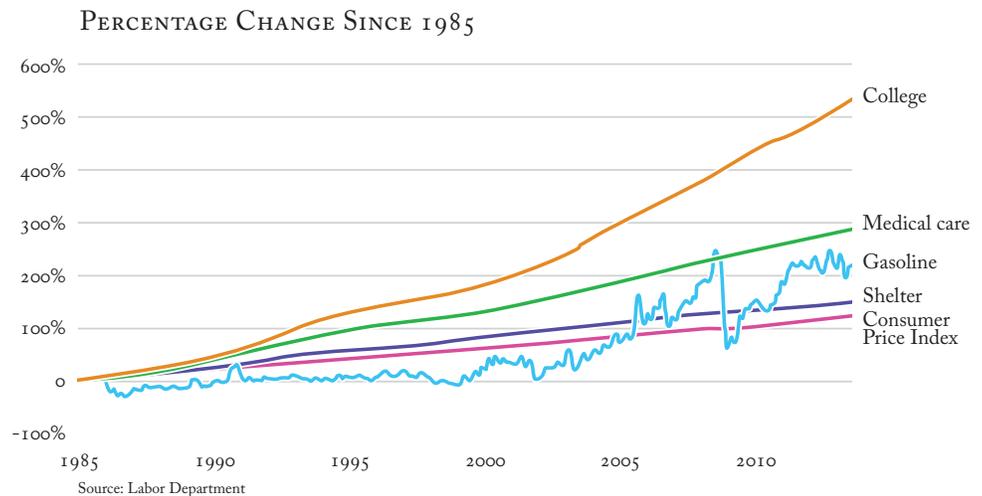


Making a Case for COLLEGE PLANNING RELIEF®

PAYING FOR COLLEGE has become arguably the single greatest area of financial concern for millions of Americans and yet the vast majority of concerned families have not hired a financial professional to assist them. The cost of college is now greater than what many people paid for their home and certainly more than what they have in their 401(k). Why is it that this has become such a worry for families and yet only a small percentage of these concerned Americans turn to a trained college planner for help?

In a country where it's common practice to hire professionals and pay for their services, recognizing their ability to help us, it's peculiar that so many families choose to go it

alone when planning for college. Is there something so intimidating about college planning that causes this? Or, is it possible that the combination of outrageous college costs and a challenging economy has simply made families perceive this subject matter as a lost cause?



“75% of students get in to their first choice college.

Unfortunately, more and more students are not attending their first choice school and this is in large part because of cost. Last year, 57% of students, the highest percent on record, chose not to attend their first choice school.”

— “The American Freshman National Norms, Fall 2013,” *Forbes*, April 2014

I have spent the better part of the last 12 years as a college planner, routinely showing families how to effectively pay for college without jeopardizing their own financial future. I can unequivocally tell you that there is a tremendous amount of genuine value that can be provided to a family concerned about paying for college. Families regularly acknowledge that they didn't realize that “people like me” existed and that they don't understand why everyone doesn't use a college planner. People aren't aware of us and there simply are not enough of us!

Those financial professionals that have found their way into this *rewarding and lucrative* niche all agree that *finding business isn't hard, creating significant value to the client is a no-brainer and making a great income is most certainly a bi-product of these efforts*. What's challenging is finding enough time to see as many people that actually want to see and talk to you!

In marketing terms, college planning is clearly in the early stages of market awareness. In other words, people are still learning about us. As I've said, often

consumers are not aware that college planning services exist, but it's important to know that there's another group that is still coming into this awareness: providers.

For the past four years I have spent a great deal of my time speaking to and training financial professionals on how to incorporate college planning into their practices. My audiences have included stock brokers, CPAs, financial planners, insurance agents, mortgage brokers, annuity sales people, attorneys and many various combinations there of.

I am a 20-year veteran in the financial services industry, holding a variety of licenses including securities and insurance. In addition, I have owned and operated a mortgage brokerage company as well as a tax planning and tax services firm. I believe my diverse background allows me to provide some valuable perspective on what it takes to create a successful and unique marketing program.

Most in the financial services industry have the same or similar investments, insurance and investment management programs. There is nothing unique about what one insurance salesman or annuity salesman has over another in terms of product. Everyone says that their service is impeccable and that they really take care of their clients. This however is easy to say and I would dare say that most of the time it isn't necessarily the truth! So with insurance and annuity professionals on every block in town how do you create a differentiating factor? How do you truly separate your business from theirs? Differentiation can be created through marketing and specialization.

College planning is a discipline for financial professionals where this can happen. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, over 2.9 million new freshman entered college in 2013 and roughly that same number will go in 2014, 2015 and so on. In fact there is very little to suggest that this

trend is going to change anytime soon. The market place for parents concerned about paying for college is abundant!

Specializing in college planning to help these families does require some

training. Working with a reputable, experienced organization of active college planners such as College Planning Relief arms you with the necessary training both initially and on-going to be able to obtain this knowledge with relative ease and in short order.

Our online "Residency Training" has been carefully constructed and fine tuned over the past five years to ensure that even the most green individual about college planning can and will be capable in just a couple of weeks of guiding families successfully through the college planning process.

You will find that the majority of your clients with college-bound children will welcome this service with open arms.

A recurring prospecting machine that does not cost you a dime!

Fall and late spring are great times to be talking about college planning; families/students are looking at schools, completing financial aid forms, and most importantly, trying to figure out how they will pay for college.

What better way than college planning for you to be able to *fill your calendar with meetings during times of year that your calendar isn't as full?* Mind you, the idea of adding college planning into your practice isn't to fill your calendar with useless meetings, but rather to fill your calendar with productive meetings that lead to billable work and additional life, annuity and investment sales.

Most competent financial professionals have a good sense of the economic state of their clients. As I have discussed previously, you are able to see all aspects of their finances, including income and assets. You are privy to job changes, refinanced mortgages, layoffs, etc. What you may or may not be aware of are the very real concerns that your clients and prospects have about their financial futures, specifically as it relates to their kids' college and their own retirement plans. Your clients likely feel a huge sense of responsibility to help their kids with college expenses, and yet they are concerned about how doing so will impact their ability to retire. In spite of the fact that our current generation of college graduates is having a difficult time getting jobs, most people still subscribe to the theory that a college degree is the foundation of their kids' future.

The reality is that the cost of college has increased at two to three times normal inflation for more than three decades. This fact, coupled with challenging stock and housing markets, has created real panic and concern in your clients about paying for college without jeopardizing their retirement. How can they possibly pull this off?!

What's more, they don't know where to turn for help. Most end up resigning themselves to pay and borrow for college without a plan, which in most cases is financially tragic. Most end up spending tens of thousands more dollars than they should or worse, yet they obligate themselves to loans and future loan

payments they cannot possibly afford. *If they knew that you could help them navigate their way through the college aid and selections process, most wouldn't think twice about taking you up on this.*

Helping your clients and community with college planning will do more than dramatically add to your bottom line; it will drive your client retention higher. It will allow you to solidify a relationship whereby your client already liked and trusted you, but now sees you as a hero.

You are no longer simply a product salesman

or an investment guy but rather you are a proactive planner showing them ways to reduce out of pocket costs by thousands of dollars or more. You become the trusted advisor. *Many studies have shown that a consumer's loyalty will increase with the number of goods and services they purchase from a single organization, and with College Planning Relief you could have the ability to offer them more.*

For most advisors entering the college planning business, they have to not only learn college planning, they also have to convince people that they should trust them enough to pay them a fee to assist with the college process. Working with your existing clients, the trust is already there. You will be

*College Planning Relief
arms you with the necessary
training both initially and
on-going to be able to obtain this
knowledge with relative ease
and in short order.*

able to easily share with them that you have added a new aspect to your practice to be able to better serve them. *You will find that the majority of your clients with college bound children will welcome this new service with open arms.*

A proper and professional introduction to a qualified prospect is what most everyone in the financial services business looks for. In fact I would say that most are looking for a consistent stream of these types of introductions. The reason is simple. These types of introductions typically start at a higher level of trust and respect. A higher level of trust and respect often results in a significantly higher success or “close” rate and also a sales cycle that takes less time.

Sponsored workshops where you become the keynote speaker (expert) for an organization such as a school, church, corporation or any organization for that matter comprised of parents with college bound students is arguably the best way to receive effectively a large number of professional introductions. As the sponsor representative introduces you to their members (and says very nice wonderful things about you) the audience sees you as someone vetted by their organization and therefore because they know, like, and trust the organization they want to know, like, and trust you! *In fact, our statistics show that 70% of the audience will request an appointment with you at your office!*

College Planning Relief will show you exactly how to work with such organizations to not only have you in to speak but to fill the room with qualified prospects that will want to come and meet with you. But it gets better than that, the organization will have you back again and again, year after year. *A recurring prospecting machine that does not cost you a dime!*

College Planning Relief will give you the ability to develop college planning recommendations and strategies that will be of tremendous value to these clients. You will easily be able to charge hundreds of dollars for these reports, and the value that your clients will receive from them will be exponential to what they pay you.

Your clients will truly rely on you to help them and they will be glad to pay you to put these strategies in place because the benefit to them is much greater than the incremental cost of setting it up.

Once again, with college planning you win again because you are able to increase your per client or per household revenue. What's even better is your clients are going to be glad to pay you more!

One last benefit of college planning that will surely enhance your bottom line is the referral component. All businesses love referrals and most of us wish we could increase the number of referrals that we receive. Good service and quality work will always lead to some referrals but sometimes you need to find other things that are tangible enough for you to build a referral campaign around.

By adding College Planning Relief to your array of services, you are adding a component to your business that most financial professionals don't offer, and *setting yourself apart from your competition.* I can

Helping your clients with college planning will do more than dramatically add to your bottom line; it will drive your client retention higher. It will allow you to solidify a relationship whereby your client already liked and trusted you, but now sees you as a hero.

tell you from experience that families concerned about paying for college will often spend time talking about this issue with other families in the same situation. Your clients will tell their friends about this financial professional, who is not only a trusted advisor, but a proactive, well-rounded individual with the ability to save them tens of thousands on the cost of college for their children.

Once again, with college planning you win because you are able to increase your per-client or per-household revenue. What's even better is your clients are going to be glad to pay you more!

Copyright 2014 – All rights reserved.

Scott Moffitt is the co-founder, President and CEO of the Summit Financial Group, Inc. and College Planning Relief[®], based in Loveland, Ohio. Over the last decade, he has spoken to thousands of people nationwide about various financial topics. His first book, *College and Retirement, You CAN Do Both*, was originally published in 2010 and revised in 2013.



101 Commerce Blvd., Loveland, Ohio 45140 · 866.249.8761 · collegeplanningrelief.com