

How Do You Know We Are a Good Fit?

By Beverly Bertram and Michelle Bertram

“Bev and Michelle, you said that one of the things Warren Buffet looks for someone he enjoys spending time with. How do you know whether it is going to work out when you meet a new advisor?” Asked Mr. Fredric, a retired professional.

That’s a very good question. Here’s what we know: there must be a good fit for long term success. While you are evaluating an advisor for a good fit, the must be evaluating you as well.

We reviewed our most enduring relationships and have identified Seven Key Characteristics.

1) They Live by Their Values

Values like honesty, integrity, and hard work – to name just a few – are the foundation of everything that they do. They do not sacrifice their values for results... then end never justifies the means.

2. The Know the Value of a Dollar

Mr. Woodley, a Wisconsin business owner, said it best, *“Every dollar I have is valuable to me. It came by the sweat of my brow. I risked everything I own to start this business and keep it running. I don’t want to pay one more dollar than I am required.”*

They have worked hard to earn, save and accumulate their money.

3. They Believe Wealth is More than Money

They know that true wealth has many dimensions...including personal, spiritual, social, human and intellectual capital. They believe all forms of wealth are worth preserving.

“Relationships are more important than my money. Of course, I want to have enough to secure my lifestyle, but more than that, I want to positively impact my family and my community.” confided Mrs. Hampton, a widow farmer.

4. They are Open to New Ideas

They know there is no monopoly on good ideas, no corner on creativity,: therefor, they approach new ideas with an open mind. Many have a reasonable plan and good advisors... yet they are open to new ideas that move them to the next level.

5. They understand that not making a decision, is a Decision

Their experiences has taught them that procrastination is one of the biggest threats to success. Not moving forward, is really moving backward, not deciding, is deciding... They gather the information needed to make wise choices and then ACT.

6. They Know What They Do Well

By implication, they know what they don’t do well.

“I tried the do-it-yourself route with my money, what a disaster! I know enough to be dangerous...besides, I can make more money with my time that it costs to delegate.” Shared Mr. Wilson, a recently retired business man.

7. They Care about Quality

They agree with John Ruskin who said, *“There is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider only price are this man’s lawful prey.”*

They hire, respect and reward talented specialists... and desire win-win relationships with the people they enjoy.

These Seven Key Characteristics have been the foundation for every enduring relationship we have... and we look for them in everyone we work with, whether business owners, retired professionals or woman on their own.

Beverly Bertram and Michelle Bertram are financial teachers, consultants and the creators of the Dream Retirement Process. Bev and Michelle can be reached at 608-987-1511