

From: Herdt, Doug
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 12:03 AM
To: EBSA.FiduciaryRuleExamination
Subject: The DOL fiduciary rule will not fix this industry--education will

I wish to address the DOL Fiduciary Rule.

I have been in the financial services arena and a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) for more than a quarter century. I have always been an advocate for "doing what is in the best interest of my clients". I also know many who either just give lip service to that value or totally ignore it--and their clients suffer. Having said that, I do not believe the method the DOL is proposing will do anything but add paperwork--not values.

I know of many so called advisers who are nothing more than selfish sales people. They could care less about their clients' best interest. I also know many totally competent, caring, selfless advisers who honestly do live a fiduciary standard. In 27 years of being "on the ground" with both types, I do believe there is one overriding factor which differentiates the groups. Like any other factor, there are exceptions.

That one factor is "professional education". This industry has virtually no barriers to entry.. Simply pass a test or two--which does not teach one how to be a professional adviser. In other professions, such as law and medicine, one must complete significant schooling, and then apprentice under the supervision of a doctor/lawyer. It is not so--but should be in the financial services arena.

I have found that those who complete their CFP designation--which requires a minimum of a Bachelor's degree, an additional 6 semesters of excellent, concept oriented courses, 6000 hours of work in the industry and continuing education...and an oath to live a fiduciary standard--are for the most part infinitely better advisers than those who paid no price to learn the business. I believe with all my heart that this industry needs to become a profession, and that barriers to entry would go along way in helping the industry and the clients they serve.

Simply having a client sign a form that says the adviser is acting in their best interest (as in the DOL fiduciary rule) will do nothing to getting the thugs that permeate this business to do the right thing.

My junior partner who will buy my practice in the near future has not only become a CFP and has a Masters in Financial Services--he has also been mentored under me for more than a decade. My son who is currently exploring coming into the industry is enrolled not only in college to get his BS, but also in the CFP program.

Advisers can NOT be trained by a wholesaler who has a sales goal and agenda--nor by a sales manager who has a quota. They need to be trained in professional schools, have a mentor and learn concepts--not sales pitches.

Please for the good of the industry, and especially for clients who put all they have in the care and trust of an adviser--help enact rules that would assure that they are in the hands of trained, caring, competent, honest professionals. If I had my wish, this industry would only hire CFP professionals, and those who are mentoring under one--and on their way to becoming one.

I believe it is the only (although still not perfect way) to assure that clients are treated with their best interest in mind.

Sincerely,

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