



Meet Our Team



Christopher T. Smith, CFP®

What is something interesting about you that would surprise someone?

Most people are surprised when they find out I wrestled for 12 years because of my build – tall and lanky – but a little hard work and drive go a long way.

How do you like to spend time outside of the office?

If I'm not at work, I like to spend my time at the gym, playing a round of golf, snowboarding, and wake-surfing.

Fries on your salad or on the side?

Double order of fries, hold the salad.

Why did you choose financial planning as your profession?

I started college at Kent State University, wanting to major in architecture. I lasted only one semester before I realized I am not crafty enough to make handmade architecture models. I then transferred to Penn State University, where I happened to take a "Personal Financial Planning" course. I quickly knew financial planning was the career path I wanted to pursue.

What is one piece of financial advice you offer clients?

Taking the emotions out of financial decisions can be tough, but it is imperative to your financial success. Money is extremely emotional and emotion clouds logic. The relationship between the stock market and the economy has been known to take investors on a rollercoaster ride of emotions. Many investors buy when they should sell and sell when they should buy because they listen to their emotions and not logic.

Fund manager Ralph Wagner uses a great analogy to describe the relationship between the stock market and the economy. "There's an excitable dog on a very long leash in New York City, darting randomly in every direction. The dog's owner is walking from Columbus Circle, through Central Park, to the Metropolitan Museum. At any one moment, there is no predicting which way the pooch will lurch." "But in the long run, you know he's heading northeast at an average speed of three miles per hour. What is astonishing is that almost all of the dog watchers, big and small, seem to have their eye on the dog, and not the owner."

The stock market, or the dog in Wagner's analogy, receives most of the attention by investors because of its volatile nature. However, if you follow the economy (the dog's owner) while using a sound portfolio construction, you may be able to keep your emotions at bay.

What do you think are the most important steps people can take to improve their financial well-being?

Take inventory of what you have by creating a net worth statement. You can't achieve goals without knowing what you have to work with.

We use our client's net worth statements to help prioritize goals such as establishing an emergency fund, paying off debt, increasing retirement and education savings, and planning for estate transfers in the easiest and most cost-effective way.

 **Allegheny Financial Group**

Christopher T. Smith, CFP®

Financial Planner

csmith@alleghenyfinancial.com

PH: 412.536.8114