

Problems and solutions: A guide to trust services

Acquiring wealth is the first lap on the road to financial security. Putting wealth to work is just as important, just as difficult, and the job is full of unanticipated pitfalls. Modern financial problems may be either routine or esoteric. Solutions may be straightforward or unconventional.

We're here to help. We specialize in solving financial problems, and we bring an uncommon array of abilities to the problem-solving process. Our resources include a variety of specialists, from investment experts to data processors to financial counselors.

Let's see how they go about meeting our customers' financial needs . . .

Problem: "I read the business and financial press regularly, but I just can't keep up with all the developments in the financial markets. It seems like the investment rules are being rewritten every week. I need help from a clear-eyed professional, but I'm not about to give up control of my portfolio."

Solution: Two approaches suggest themselves. We sell unbiased *investment advice* for a fee. Our investment professionals have access to a wide range of economic and financial information. Solid information is the base upon which your investment decisions must stand. From portfolio balance to investment selection, we can help you feel secure that your investment decisions have been made with guidance from knowledgeable experts.

We also offer full *investment management* for your portfolio. Together, we develop your investment objectives and map investment strategy. We'll execute that strategy and keep you well informed on a regular basis.

Problem: "Though I'm alone, I'm enjoying my retirement. I'm still healthy, and I travel regularly—I just got back from a two-week stay with my daughter and grandchildren. But that visit brought a new worry to mind. None of my children live nearby, and I don't want to burden them. If something happens to me, if I should have to be hospitalized, what will happen to my finances?"

Solution: Our most important, most flexible service is the *living trust*. Initially, we'll handle the investment chores while you remain in charge. But should something happen to you, we are authorized to take over on your behalf. We'll pay your bills while continuing to manage your assets. You can designate other trust beneficiaries in addition to yourself; in that event, distributions to them from the trust won't be interrupted.

Problem: "I was executor of my father's estate, and it was a much bigger job than I ever expected it to be. With my real estate and other investments, I know my own estate will be much more complicated than his was. I don't think either of my children can handle the job, and I can't think of a family friend who seems appropriate either."

Solution: We have extensive experience in *estate settlement*. No estate is too intricate for our team of experts. We can avoid the mistakes and delays associated with inexperienced executors. In addition, when your will names us, you have the assurance that we'll always be available for this very important job.

Problem: "I'm worried about my estate plan. I know there's no federal estate tax if I leave everything to my spouse, but what about later, when the children inherit?"

Solution: The most flexible approach to providing family financial security is through trusts, established either during your life or with your will. In 2008 a federal estate tax exemption allows you to leave up to \$2 million to your heirs—\$3.5 million in 2009. (In 2010 the estate tax is scheduled for repeal for one year.) In addition, an unlimited amount may pass tax free to your spouse by way of the unlimited marital deduction. A thoughtfully drafted trust plan will balance the financial needs of the entire family, while still avoiding the federal estate tax.

Here we've touched on just a few of the more common financial problems that we're called upon to solve. Please accept our invitation to come in to discuss your own financial planning needs.

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Any developments occurring after January 1, 2008, are not reflected in this article.