Test the water before jumping in

Would you propose marriage on a first date? Or, presume to accept a new client and develop a full financial plan after one brief, general discussion? Of course not. The same premise applies when acquiring a practice. Before you discuss price, terms or even a timeline, get to know the seller better (even if you’ve known each other for years) with an initial meeting or a series of meetings.

**Ask** open-ended questions about the practice, clients and investment philosophy to determine the likelihood of this practice fitting your criteria.

**Communicate** your investment methodology and client service strategy as well as any planning services you provide. Since you have “streamlined” your own firm, you will have defined procedures and processes in place that you can explain easily and concisely.

**Convey** how you envision the seller’s practice fitting into that strategy.

**Determine** whether you should continue down the acquisition path through another meeting or part ways.