

Financial Advisor interview checklist

Wealth firms and advisory practices usually hold an HR screen, a technical round with a senior advisor or team lead, often a mock client meeting or role play, and a final round with the branch or business head.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. How do you assess a new client's risk profile?

What it checks: Whether you separate risk capacity from risk appetite and use more than a questionnaire score to decide suitable investments.

2. Tell me about a time a client wanted to exit all equity investments after a market fall.

What it checks: Your ability to manage client emotions, use data calmly and keep the client on plan without forcing them.

3. Why do you want to work as an advisor with our firm?

What it checks: Whether you understand the firm's model, fee-based or distribution, and its client segment, and have a clear reason to fit there.

4. How would asset allocation differ for a client aged 30 and one aged 55?

What it checks: Whether you link allocation to time horizon, goals and cash flow needs rather than using an age formula blindly.

5. Describe a time a client asked you to put money into a risky tip or trend they heard about.

What it checks: Whether you protect the client's interests and your own credibility when a client chases speculation.

6. How will you build your client base in the first year?

What it checks: Realism about business development, including whether you have a network and a plan that is compliant and sustainable.

7. What is the difference between a direct plan and a regular plan of a mutual fund?

What it checks: Basic mutual fund product knowledge and honesty about costs and commissions, which clients increasingly ask about.

8. Tell me about a time you found a new client had been mis-sold a product.

What it checks: Integrity and practical judgement in fixing past problems without badmouthing others or causing unnecessary losses.

9. Our pay has a modest fixed salary and incentives on assets and new clients. Does that work for you?

What it checks: Your comfort with performance-linked pay and whether your expectations are realistic for someone starting out.

10. How would you explain a SIP and rupee cost averaging to a first-time investor?

What it checks: Whether you can explain a basic concept simply and honestly, without promising returns or overselling.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Keep your NISM or other certifications current and be ready to answer questions from their syllabus, since interviewers often test basics straight from them.

- Practise a mock client meeting aloud: risk profiling, goal questions and a simple recommendation, because many firms include a role play round.
- Prepare two anonymised client stories with numbers showing how your advice changed an outcome, without sharing any real client's identity.
- Learn to calculate SIP amounts, future value with inflation and retirement corpus on a calculator or Excel quickly and correctly.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5-10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave