

Spotlight On:

## Jon Kvasnik

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Saint Paul, Minnesota



### Creating a Unique Buzz to Differentiate His Business



What made you want to become a financial advisor?

When I was in middle school, I invested in my first stock. I took \$900 of my savings and invested in an energy stock. It was my first real-life exposure to the workings of business and finance, and it showed me how much control we have over our money.

At age 25, after receiving a \$10,000 inheritance from my aunt, I met with a friend who was a financial advisor. When I saw how he helped me, I knew I wanted to be a financial advisor too. He set up an interview for me, and 26 years later I'm helping people in the same ways he helped me.

What is a typical day in the office like for you?

I get every day going with Black Magic – a great-tasting, jazzed-up coffee. Then I review my upcoming client meetings and concerns with my staff. Having an amazing staff goes a long way in my success. I have a goal of at least three client meetings or conversations a day. In the morning, I meet with clients and focus on revenue-generating activity. In the afternoon, I make client calls and concentrate on marketing, case strategies and building relationships with the bank staff.

What demographic are the majority of your clients?

The majority of our clients are preretirement in their 50s and 60s or retired. Each bank branch is located in a very different economic demographic, so I tend to have clients from a broad economic spectrum. I like my clients to share a common desire to save for their goals and appreciate our relationship.

Tell us about your financial institution and your investment program including number of advisors, business mix, number of clients and primary service offerings.

I'm located in a family-owned, 110-year-old community bank. The bank has around \$250 million in deposits and four branches within 15 miles of each other. My client base is approximately 600 households and our business mix is 30 percent recurring revenue and 70 percent client revenue from other sources.

**The financial advice business is highly competitive, and perhaps even more so in banks and credit unions. How do you differentiate yourself?**

Four years ago, I decided to become a beekeeper. I heard about the terrible struggle of bees and decided I wanted to “bee” an advocate for them. I’ve received incredible support from the bank owners. Together, we decided to place my bee colony on the bank’s rooftop. This has provided great buzz and a unique way to differentiate myself from other advisors.

**What are your strategies for finding and retaining clients?**

I primarily find clients through referrals and networking. In 2018, I started a [podcast](#). I’ve had several appearances on local NBC TV affiliates’ investing segments and a recent CBS affiliate [radio broadcast](#). These opportunities help me to continually build my client base, which I’m lucky and grateful for.

Three years ago, I committed to the idea of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investment management. I’m happy to say the majority of our clients are receptive to this strategy, because they are investing in companies that match their values.



**Describe the relationship you have with your institution's executive team and leadership of other departments. How is this important to your success?**

These relationships are vital. In fact, my success directly relates to my connections with the leadership team and owners. I’ve worked with the bank for 23 years and every year gets better. Our investment services program brings a great deal of business to the bank. Many of my clients have started banking here and in turn, refer others to our services. I’ve found consistent communication with bank leadership is key and has enabled me to be included in bank team decisions.



**What are the most significant and beneficial business practice or strategic focus changes you have made to your practice in the last 12 months? How have they impacted your business?**

Like many banks, we're challenged by decreasing lobby foot traffic due to technology. To combat this, I have increased my marketing efforts to our ESG niche market through media exposure and my podcast. I continually strengthen my relationships with the bankers, working together to sustain and grow. I also focus more on connections with potential clients outside of our bank system.

**Describe the role technology plays in your practice.**

Leveraging technology is very critical to growth and delivering excellent client experiences. Securities America continues to automate processes, which greatly helps our efficiency and client service. I incorporate Redtail and Albridge, which are vital portfolio tools.

**How does being engaged with Securities America's home office benefit you and your practice?**

When I reach out to the Securities America home office, no matter which department or who I'm working with, I strongly feel the sense that "we're in this together," which is something we all look for in business. Knowing I can reach out and find solutions and expertise when needed helps things proceed smoothly and efficiently at my office.

**Where do you see your practice in the next three to five years and beyond?**

I'm committed to increasing the average assets of each client household and would like to see the majority of our practice investing in ESG markets. And certainly, I am always open to new ideas and adapting to industry changes.



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