

HICKS NOTES

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MARKETING SEASON APPROACHES ARE YOU READY?

Like so much in business retirement plan sales have seasons. Our success depends on us recognizing and selling during these peak times. For us, this season generally runs from September through January of each year. With this peak season approaching, this newsletter will focus primarily on the issues to help you better understand this marketplace and get more clients.

CURRENT MARKET TRENDS

As the economy is slowly recovering, we are seeing some success in small business. One person defined benefit plans are a great answer for clients who have had a windfall year.

September 30th is the deadline for new Safe Harbor 401(k) plans and we are seeing these come in.

Takeovers are still a big part of our new business especially as fiduciaries are discovering the true costs of their plans and are looking to make a change. Finally, taking over plans from payroll companies is on the rise as sponsors are beginning to see problems of plan design, lack of education and performance as a determinant to their business. By understanding how to market to these segments, you will have a better chance of capturing new business.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Need a new 401(k), get it started now. Defined Benefit can wait a few months. Has the administrator finished last year's December administration? It's due October 15th. New plans

have until December 31st to be established, but if you wait too long, what options have you lost? All Defined Contribution Plans need to be restated over the next 2 years, what advantage is there to starting now? Can I add a DB plan to an existing DC plan or vice versa? All of these issues relate to the timing and the content of your sales pitch. Understanding these timing issues and how they relate to sales will make you a better advisor.

SALES TRIGGER

Do you know what a sponsor is looking for in a retirement plan? What questions you should be asking? What problems can you solve for them? Are you selling an employee benefit plan or a tax shelter plan? Are they just upset with poor service and not getting calls answered? Do the employees understand and use the plan? Are the investments subpar? Is the plan giving them the maximum allowable benefits under the law? Are they just paying too much in fees?

Some sponsors buy on plan design, some buy on fiduciary issues, some buy on fees and service - knowing what questions to ask will give you insight into what triggers may be waiting for you to offer.

In conclusion, I have raised many questions but provided very few answers. We have set up a one hour webinar where I can get into the details of these issues and help you better understand this market. Join me and learn how we can help you get more business. I look forward to sharing my experience with you. [Click here](#) for the invitation and sign up today.