

Inside the Hall of Fame

A L I C I A L E W I S

ROAD TO SUCCESS

Guiding Clients Starts
With a Great Map



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ADVISORS EXCEL®

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WITH ALICIA LEWIS



Alicia Lewis

Chuck Layman

ALICIA LEWIS IS PUTTING LAYMAN LEWIS FINANCIAL GROUP ON THE MAP.

The Retirement Roadmap, that is. Over the past few years, the Loveland, Colorado-based firm has shifted its focus away from individual product sales to comprehensive and strategic retirement planning, customized for each client.

TAKING THE SHOW OFF THE ROAD

Alicia grew up watching her father, AE Hall of Famer Chuck Layman, work for 40 years in the annuity sales industry and started her own career alongside him.

“When I got in the business, my dad was working for a company,” she said, “and he’d be driving all over northern Colorado, which is pretty spread out. So when I started — I started out by working out of the car like my dad, literally out of the trunk of my car.”

Alicia quickly realized there was a better way to work with clients. She approached a cautious Chuck about a possible change to their business model.

“I told Chuck, ‘Dad, this is it. If you don’t do this with me I’m doing it on my own. Let’s go big or let’s go home,’” she recalled.

They decided to go big, pivoting from a transaction-based model to one built on relationships and painting the bigger picture for clients. Their first steps were to put down physical roots with an office in the town where they lived and hire an administrative assistant. The

transition has been a successful one, and they have since added two producers to the firm. Alicia’s husband, Josh, is an Investment Adviser Representative and provides in-depth analysis for clients, and Jeff Green joined the service team in 2016.

“We are seeing the tremendous ways that we’re impacting people’s lives because we’re not just annuity salesmen anymore,” Alicia said. “We are this comprehensive financial firm that is helping clients with their entire situation rather than these little bits and pieces, where people say, ‘Gosh, I have three financial professionals,’ and we’re like, ‘Why?’”

“They say, ‘Well, this guy does this and this guy does this.’ We explain that it doesn’t have to be like that. We encourage clients to consolidate and make sure that it’s all working together.”

WHERE ARE YOU GOING AND HOW WILL YOU GET THERE?

That’s where the Retirement Roadmap system comes in. The team at Layman Lewis creates a written income plan for each client that visually illustrates three points: What is my destination? What products do I currently have in place to help get me there? What tools may I need to add to help make sure I stay on the road to retirement?

“We compare ourselves to the maps you access through your smartphone,” Alicia said. “Plug in your destination, and you will be guided through every twist and turn to make sure you arrive at your destination. You can even be alerted to possible delays and detours.”



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THE RETIREMENT ROADMAP SYSTEM

Layman Lewis has developed a structured approach to creating each client's unique Retirement Roadmap. The first meeting is a blend of gathering hard facts and discovering the client's ultimate goals.

“We're looking at Social Security, pensions, life insurance, long-term care, all their income, their investments,” Alicia said. But a significant amount of time is also spent on the softer questions. “Is inheritance important to you? Are you trying to spend as much money up front on vacations while you're healthy or are you trying to leave that legacy?”

“There's just a lot of that really personal stuff. You would be shocked at how many times people say, ‘Gosh, you're asking some really personal questions.’ I have to explain that we do this because knowing you on a personal level is going to help us know where your heart is. People are totally taken aback by that. They've never had that before.”

After the first meeting, the Layman Lewis team tackles a comprehensive analysis and presents the results of that analysis during the second client meeting.

“They are really just shown exactly what they have, how it's performed, what the fees have been, all of that,” Alicia said.

The team then breaks down what it all means for the client, providing information on the different options in the industry.

Recommendations, though, don't come until after the client has fully committed to work with their firm.

“At the end of that second appointment, that's where we just say, ‘Look, you see what we're capable of. You see the value of the relationship, the things that we have to offer,’” Alicia said. “You see our capabilities. We can potentially save you on fees, we can help you with the plan, we can help you create a personal Retirement Roadmap.”

Alicia says this approach was scary at first but has proven to be the best way to do business over time. Now, thanks to a commitment to following a roadmap of her own, the firm is headed exactly in the direction she originally envisioned.

“For me, personally, I don't want this to be a transactional business,” she notes. “The best parts of life can be found in relationships so of course I want that approach built into my business. The relationships with clients that are the most rewarding are those that are lasting and meaningful; I want to know them as people, not just clients, and I want them to see me as more than a financial advisor. We learn their individual hopes, dreams, cares and concerns and armed with this personal knowledge, can serve in a deeper and more meaningful capacity through their retirement years.”

“Finding success in building my business as a relational one is something I value immeasurably.”



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