The BLS Alphabet Soup: It's All in the Initials

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AIF®. CLU®. ChFC®. CPFA®. CFP®. C(k)P®.

You see those initials in our titles. Ever wonder what they mean?

Much like the familiar MD designation for medical doctors and a PhD for those who have earned a doctorate degree, the insurance and wealth management sectors also have specific initials to indicate qualifications and certifications.

This alphabet soup of designations is meant to give you the confidence that you are working with professionals who not only meet the BLS standards of excellence but have dedicated themselves to continuing education.

Let's start with the CLU® and ChFC®.

The CLU®, one of the oldest and most respected credentials in financial services, stands for Chartered Life Underwriter and refers to expertise in life insurance.

The letters ChFC®, Chartered Financial Consultant, refer to extensive training in tax and retirement planning, special needs planning, insurance, and more.

Both Howard and I share those alphabet designations...as well as the four children we raised together.

And we include those initials after our name to:

- Demonstrate our commitment to our craft, ethics, and professionalism
- Promote our in-depth knowledge of life insurance, business planning, and estate planning

What about CPFA®?

One of our favorite four-letter words, or more properly designations, the CPFA® means you are working with a Certified Plan Fiduciary Advisor who is knowledgeable about retirement plans.

Mitch Starr, Partner at BLS and Shir Keidan, Director of Employer-Sponsored Retirement Plans, are Certified Plan Fiduciary Advisor designees.

Mitch and Shir have an ethical duty to recommend appropriate investments. Their designation also signifies they are trained professionals with the skills and knowledge to:

- Develop and implement an individualized and comprehensive retirement plan for each client

- Objectively assess your current financial status, identify any areas of concern and make objective recommendations.

Shir is also a Certified 401(k) professional (C(k)P), a designation which represents the pinnacle of achievement for the professional Retirement Plan Advisor and the designation of Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF®). Her extensive knowledge, strong sense of following a fiduciary standard of care, and multiple years of experience are three important factors that can help favorably affect the outcome of the corporate retirement plans she presents to her clients.

Another four-letter favorite is FSCP®, Financial Services Certified Professional. Both Shir Keidan and Jacalyn Murray have earned this designation which involves a rigorous course of study focusing on complete product knowledge, marketing, and planning. In addition, Jacalyn has recently earned the designation of Chartered Special Needs Consultant® (ChSNC®), the only credential specifically designed to help clients plan for those with special needs.

Elizabeth Liebowitz is currently our only staff member with our final four-letter designation, FPQP®, Financial Paraplanner Qualified Professional℠

Will there be additional new designations in 2022?

As for the CFP®...

Those three letters, CFP®, mean you are working with a Certified Financial Planner Professional who has met the CFP® Board's rigorous education and experience requirements.

There are three BLS professionals who have those three initials after their names: Cynthia (Cindy) Day, Keven Milgram, and Craig Novek.

And the award for the employee with the most initials goes to….

You guessed it: Shir Keidan, FSCP®, AIF®, CPFA®, C(K)P® who has proudly earned every initial after her name.

Click HERE to learn more about our team (and their initials)!

AIF (accredited investment fiduciary) designation