

A Complete Guide - Why are financial advisors leaving Wells Fargo?

Financial advisors have been leaving Wells Fargo for several years, with the primary drivers being a damaged corporate reputation and a shifting business model.

Financial advisors have been leaving Wells Fargo since a series of scandals began in 2016, with advisors seeking greater independence, higher compensation, and a more supportive culture. Many advisors have "broken away" to start their own independent firms, often affiliated with external platforms like LPL Financial, to gain autonomy and increase payout percentages. Wells Fargo has since adapted by investing in its independent advisor channel and launching an RIA Solutions unit, but concerns about the firm's culture and profitability over client interests persist for some advisors.

Key Reasons for Departure

- 2016 Scandal and Cultural Concerns:
 - A major catalyst was the 2016 banking scandal involving unauthorized accounts, which created a lasting perception of a "profit over clients" culture. This has made some advisors question the firm's ethics and stability.
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 - Desire for Independence and Autonomy:
 - Many advisors want to own their own businesses, manage their practices on their own terms, and operate without the restrictions of a wirehouse model.
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