

Ep #218: 1 Year into a Financial Planner Career with  
Daniel Tobias and Christopher Lee



# NEW PLANNER PODCAST



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**With Your Host**

**Caleb Brown**

[\*New Planner Podcast\*](#) with Caleb Brown

## Ep #218: 1 Year into a Financial Planner Career with Daniel Tobias and Christopher Lee

Welcome to the *New Planner Podcast*, where it's all about helping you successfully enter the financial planning profession and accelerate your financial planning career.

This podcast will help you understand the profession, become familiar with the various career paths available to you, and avoid the mistakes that limit your success.

Join your host, Caleb Brown, to explore the human side of creating a successful planning career through interviews, personal experience, and insights from the trenches.

Let's get started.

**Caleb Brown:** Welcome to the 218th episode of the New Planner Podcast. This is Caleb Brown, your host. My guests today are Dan Tobias and Chris Lee. Dan and Chris work for Passport Wealth Management, where Dan is the CEO and Chris is an associate financial planner. Dan joins the show today to share his journey to starting his own firm, starting with growing up around financial planning since his father owned an RIA firm.

He shares his thought process on the pros and cons of joining his father's firm and why it wasn't a good fit and why he left to travel the world for a few years. He also talked about reintegrating himself into the workforce. And staying at a firm a few years before he started Passport. He went on to explain the ups and downs of starting a new firm and when he knew it was time to hire and what type of hire he thought he needed to make.

Chris shares his journey of growing up in the industry, and even though he tried to go a different path, realizing that this was the path for him. He shares his own world travel stories and how he had his first interview with Dan while he was in the Philippines and why they are such a good fit because they have so many things in common. Stay tuned for their thoughts on ideal clients and their most fun parts of the job. I hope you enjoy this episode with Dan Tobias and Chris Lee.

Hey, Dan and Chris, welcome the new planner podcast.

**Chris Lee:** Hello, Caleb. Good to be here.

**Caleb Brown:** Happy New Year to you guys. Thanks for making time and coming on the show.

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**Daniel Tobias:** You're welcome. Now you've dated the show. Everyone knows it's January show.

**Caleb Brown:** Yeah. So this is January 14. So we usually try to stay three or four weeks ahead of time. So we've just to try to stay ahead of it, but hey, I know I've been trying to get you guys for a while. Really cool story and I'm glad to have you on. And Dan, why don't we just start with you just to set the framework, like it's your business, you set the firm up.

So just talk to us about, maybe an overview of how you got in financial planning and why you set up your own firm.

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah, sure. I guess the question is how far back do we go? I'll try and be quickish. So I was offered a position by my father coming out of college. I did not go to a CFP program. And I said, "No, thank you. I want to make my own way." And five years later, making my own way, I was not doing anything in financial planning, but five years later, making my own way, ended up being quitting my job after having saved up a bunch of money to travel the world with my wife. And so we did that for two years, got back, we were still in our twenties, looked at each other, said, "What do we know how to do?"

Turns out, I'm in my twenties and I know how to plan for—save and execute on an actual retirement and it's like, "Oh, that's what my dad does. Maybe I should have taken that offer." And so he and I started talking and I did take that offer. It was very kind of him. He didn't change the offer from what he had offered me seven odd years prior.

It was the same exact dollars I ended up getting paid. I was really appreciative of that. And, so join that firm. The problem was that it was in South Florida where I grew up and I did not want to stay there, I did not want to be there. I had left Florida for college, I surely left for that trip around the world, and somehow going home just didn't feel right to me.

And we did it for a few years, it worked out okay, we had our three kids, we grew our family, it was great, but it was time to leave Florida. That wasn't home to us, maybe that was home to me where I grew up, but it wasn't home to us. So we talked about setting out and opening up a new shingle under the aegis of that firm for a whole lot of family reasons that could easily fill a volume of podcasts.

That never happened. So instead I found myself searching for my own position. I actually, Caleb, we talked back then when I was looking for a job.

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**Caleb Brown:** Sure did.

**Daniel Tobias:** So I was on that side of it at that point. And found, through my network, a friend introduced me to another firm. We're here, where I ended up started there.

I lasted there about two years. That was not the right fit for me. Likewise, that firm owner was suddenly really interested in selling to a large conglomerate and I wasn't interested. So off I went to, we didn't want to move again. We were happy where we ended up, and so that was when Passport Wealth Management was formed.

**Caleb Brown:** Got it. Yeah. And let me just go back to the last part there. I mean, are you a born entrepreneur or were you an accidental entrepreneur because you couldn't really find a fit?

**Daniel Tobias:** Gosh, I love the way you phrase that. I think I have to say both. This was an accident. I never wanted it. I would have loved to have stayed at that last firm forever if it had worked out.

But I think those who have known me my whole life will say, "No, there's no chance," that I'm anything but a born entrepreneur and this was always going to happen one way or another. So I'm going to stick to both, but depending on who else might be answering that question, they might have a far stronger opinion.

**Caleb Brown:** When did you found Passport? How long have you been at it thus far?

**Daniel Tobias:** 2018, I think. May 2018.

**Caleb Brown:** So was that about six and a half years or something like that?

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah, about, yeah.

**Caleb Brown:** Okay. So you started, so you had success, like you were getting clients, getting traction, maybe walk us through that. And then when did you start thinking about, "Okay, wait a minute, I need to hire someone like Chris."

We were going to get to in a moment.

**Daniel Tobias:** Oh gosh. Someone like Chris took some time and Caleb, I look forward to getting to that and how that went down with you and I talking about Chris before we

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ever met Chris. But, yeah, so it started growing. I had time on my hands. I could do everything myself.

I thought, "Great, I'll get to, 30, 40 clients, maybe we'll stop." But the reality was that I set a goal at the start. My very first quarterly letter contains this and to my then clients, and it basically says, at that point by the time that I rolled around, my father had sold his firm. And also I saw the sale coming with the firm I landed at.

And I saw that happen twice. And basically what I put in that letter was that I don't want to do that. I want to be able to transition my relationship in such a way, my work in such a way that you, my client will never notice that gradually over time, you will come to be served by a bevy of other individuals.

And when I start to exit stage right, it will be seamless because there will be people around. So that necessitated some amount of growth that necessitated some amount of hiring a person like Chris, and it just took some time to get there and some growth. But that I'd say from day one, again, going back to that accidental owner from day one, I hated doing this alone.

And so from day one, it was, "Gosh, can I get a partner?" And at some point that changed to, "Okay, I think I'm down the pike long enough." Getting a partner 50-50, like to really do this together, that's not really going to happen easily at this point, if ever. And so, all right, let's start working on that G2 so that we can fulfill the second half of that and also fill the first half of that to me, which is having that sort of partnership aspect, which is the longterm goal here.

**Caleb Brown:** And I really appreciate it. I know we started working together. You sent me a copy of that newsletter. You sent me that letter like, "This is what I told them." So I appreciate that.

Chris, let's come to you. So maybe just walk us through how this all got started for you. I mean, how did you even get on to financial planning?

**Christopher Lee:** For sure. I think my story starts probably a little bit earlier than most, I think financial planning has a lot of career changers, a lot of people that just don't know about the industry until they randomly do somehow.

Mine started when I was very, very young, grew up with my dad, who's a financial planner up in Nashville. And Dan and I both having our fathers in the business is one of many similarities that we have, which I'm sure we'll uncover some of the others, but

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yeah, it was just topic of the dinner table. And we'd hear when things are good, when things are bad, as much as a 10-year-old can comprehend.

And then fast forward a couple of years, I was 15, 16, starting to think about college and think about a major and financial planning was really the one career that I wasn't going to do. There's a thousand out there. I didn't have to follow the path of my dad. Surely I could figure something else out.

So I started taking, I was a very strange 16-year-old, but started taking these career assessments and figuring out what I wanted to do. And financial planning kept coming up and I would just ignore it and ignore it. And eventually I was like, "All right, well, let's—maybe there's a reason why it's coming up. Let's check this out." And I think maybe just had some more serious conversations with my dad about what it is and ended up going to college with that being the goal, but went to a larger school, went to the University of Georgia, and that was strategic because not only was there a good planning program there, but it was also a large school with a lot of other good programs.

So maybe I, sophomore year, would want to be an accountant or something like that. I wanted to have that escape hatch and throughout college, it just, the more classes I took, the different internships I had, the more conversations I had with people who are currently doing it, the more I fell in love with it.

And it just, I thought that was a really, really good landing spot for me. So, I got a bachelor's in economics and then went straight to grad school, still at UGA and got a master's in financial planning and then took a gap year, another similarity that Dan and I have in common, and just spent 11 months traveling the world, came back, moved to Charlotte, was looking for a firm, and wound up at Passport.

**Caleb Brown:** I love it. And there's a lot to unpack there. We're going to get to that, but before we go any further, all right, Chris, on the spot, what's the best country, your favorite country. And then Dan, we're coming to you, most favorite country that you visited.

**Christopher Lee:** I would probably say the Philippines, there's a lot of American influence there after some wars, so it's not the craziest place to go. You can find some slices of home just with the culture there. I mean, it's beautiful. You get off the plane there and it looks like a calendar, 360 degrees. It's gorgeous. Dan, what about you?

**Daniel Tobias:** I'm going to give you an answer you don't want, which is this one. And as boring as that is, the power stays on, the trash gets collected and the water is always running.

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And in the absence of a major natural disaster, always drinkable. And that is something that we all take for granted. And it is really an amazing thing that most of the world doesn't get to appreciate. But the answer you do want, I'd say, any country with a strong middle class. For us that was Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, Chile, Egypt, Turkey, Thailand, all those places that strong middle classes or middle income economic countries.

The world bank has some kind of status there. And and all those countries were places that our dollar went really far. We could get around easily. We could do a lot of things, and we could have fun because there were people there, locals doing the same.

**Caleb Brown:** Talk to us a little bit more about your firm. I mean, who are you guys trying to attract? And maybe Dan, we'll start with you. What do you charge and what kind of service and process are you taking them through?

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah. All great questions. So I'd say we never, I never really drank from the niching Kool Aid terribly much. We do have a sizable number of clients who are actually in this industry in one way, shape, or form tied to investment houses and things like that, but that's not something we advertise for market too.

It's just sort of something that's happened. I'd say really our focus is, to the degree I can define it, it's roughly Gen Xers who really don't want a traditional 60, age 65, light switch retirement instead, some level of a dimmer switch, et cetera. That said, probably if I look at our IMX, Gen X is probably on the low side relative to boomers and millennials, just something about it, getting people in their fifties is seemingly harder than talking to people in their thirties and sixties, I guess.

But generally I'd say all sort of feel the same value of their time with respect to great, we value this as a service. We value not having to do these things, not having to think about these things, knowing that we're taken care of and also value that, hey, we're skating to something other than just the traditional age 65, flip the light switch sort of thing, which is not a great way to define it from a marketing standpoint.

But nonetheless, that's, I think, where we are. Beyond that, where we charge, we are different here. So starting off, I always struggled with the straight AUM. I saw a few other people doing sort of a complexity based fixed fee that they would amend every couple of years. I didn't love that either.

There's a whole bunch of people out there now doing the flat retainer. I see issues with that that I didn't love. And so we've sort of hybrid-ed it all. So to the degree we are managing assets, we charge 50 basis points, which is a lot less than most. And then simultaneously we add a fixed fee to that based on the complexity of the client.

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So that fixed fee might range, I think at the lowest end for us is one to \$2,000. And at the highest end is starting to push 10 and the two get added together, divided by four and building arrears.

**Caleb Brown:** Got it. Okay. Sounds good. So you were growing the client base and then we started having discussions about kind of who to hire. So let's go down memory lane there. Like, 'cause I think if I remember right, the candidate you wanted was someone that had a lot more experience than Chris. Did I get that right?

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah. Well, I'll take it. Further, I won't even say the candidate, Caleb. I said to you, "I don't want to hire someone straight out of school," specifically.

And these are not my words. So these cannot be attributable to me, what I'm about to say. I have a particular manager boss of mine early in my career, steered in my brain. This was back when I was at IBM. New hires at IBM in the division I was in were called band sixes. When you started out at college, you were a band six and you'd go up to band 10.

And I remember this particular manager saying, "I don't want any stinking band sixes. I don't want people who are going to ask me if they can wipe their *arse*." I don't know if I'm allowed to curse on podcasts. I don't know what the rules are. And that sentiment has been seared with me and I don't necessarily feel exactly that way.

I don't necessarily feel even partially that way, but nonetheless, there is a lot of learning that a person goes through in their initial job that is, I would say, separate and apart from learning this industry, just learning how to show up on time to work and dress and these kinds of things.

And so I really didn't have the bandwidth to go through that. So Caleb, I said, "No, I want an experience higher. I don't want to go with someone out of the college programs. They've got great education, but there's a whole lot there that I just, I don't have the bandwidth to deal with right now."

And you put three candidates in front of me. Two, I pooh-poohed right away. One, I was ready to hire on the spot. You said, "No, we got to talk to all of them." The first two faded out pretty quick. The third one, after I talked to them, eventually a lot of tossing and turning decided to pass for a variety of reasons.

And then you said, "By the way, I know you said no college hires. I know you wanted experience, but you got to talk to this guy. It's just too good of a match. You both have traveled, you've got that in common. You both have fathers in this business. There's just



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so much here, by the way, he's got a master's. It's not quite like out of a bachelor's, he's got good internship time." And I was like, "I mean, I'm up at the creek right now. I got nothing to lose in a phone conversation." And Caleb, I am forever indebted to you. That was some of the best advice I've gotten in this entrepreneurial journey, because here we are, and it's been great.

**Caleb Brown:** Chris, had you heard that? I mean, did you have the inside story or is this the first time you're hearing that?

**Christopher Lee:** I've heard it before, but it doesn't hurt to hear again. It feels pretty good.

**Caleb Brown:** Well, Chris, I want you to talk about your perspective. I mean, the timing was just beautiful, right? I mean, you'd come back and you were already in Charlotte, so maybe just, I mean, you had no experience and I think I told you on the phone, like this firm owner that I'm representing does not want to talk to anybody that doesn't have any experience and look where we are now. So we got it to work. So maybe just talk a little bit about maybe what you did to get Dan to hire you.

**Daniel Tobias:** Do you know?

**Christopher Lee:** I don't. I wonder if it's even just a combination of maybe because, Caleb, you prefaced, "Hey, this is going to be an uphill battle." Maybe I went into an interview more calm and just more relaxed. But, yeah, I don't know. Dan, I don't know if you want to answer that, but that would be interesting.

**Daniel Tobias:** I can try. I'd say, I think the travel had a lot to do with it. Not so much in terms of a commonality, but in terms of an opportunity, and I hope this doesn't sound patronizing. Because I went through the same thing myself, but in just a space of maturing. And so all those kinds of things that I described with respect to learning the job that I didn't want to deal with, you had in a sense dealt with already by either A, the internships that you'd had, or B, just being on the road, having to fend for yourself every day.

And so there was a whole lot in that, that A, I could, I lived, I respected, I understood, but that led to you just having A, a certain confidence about you and B, a certain modesty about you as well. You said, "Hey, I've got a master's, but I don't know what I'm doing yet. I don't want you to think that I can come in and do all the things, right. I need to learn." And so those things combined, I think, gave me a very real comfort that, hey, you're not willing to just say whatever it takes to get a job, which is common. A lot of people will say whatever they think needs to be said, right? But also a confidence in yourself and an ability to get through it, to learn and to grow.

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And I think that learning and growing, that growth mindset was evident. And I think that is a big, big, big thing. That is something that we work on daily.

**Caleb Brown:** A lot of it was the internships too, right? I mean, you came into this with three internships that you kind of glossed over earlier. So, but you're no slouch, right?

No slouch. I mean, I just, I knew when we talked that a lot of Dan's fears, he wasn't going to have those with you because I knew what his fears were because of the items he just laid out. But why don't you talk to us a little bit about just when you guys started interviewing, I mean here you are you just moved to Charlotte. I think you were at Nashville or something at that point or in a foreign country somewhere. I think your first interview you were in Africa or something, you tell—

**Christopher Lee:** Himalayan mountains in India and my hair is way too long for an interview

**Caleb Brown:** So why go to a sole practitioner. There's a lot of risk on your part. Why do that? When you could have interviewed with all the big firms in Charlotte.

**Christopher Lee:** That's a really good question. Yeah, so how Dan felt about hiring someone out of college is how I felt about working for a small shop. So it just makes it that much crazier that we're here.

I think what it was is there has to be a good fit, which I felt there was one and there still is one with Dan. So that gave me a lot of confidence in going through with interviews and then really seriously considering the offer. But that entrepreneurial itch that you guys were talking about earlier, I think that's something that I have to a degree as well, and that can be scratched a little bit easier at a place like Passport versus one of the bigger boys.

So I think just kind of a combination of that. And felt like there was maybe a higher ceiling. Definitely a lower floor, but chasing a higher ceiling is what brought me to Passport.

**Caleb Brown:** Paint the picture, if you would, right now, as detailed as you can. I mean, you've been there about a year, right? So we're a year into this. So when you first joined, what was your role? What were you spending most of your time doing?

**Christopher Lee:** Learning is the cop out answer, and I could argue that's still a lot of my role today, but one of the great things about a small firm is there's just a lot more

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flexibility. I think one of the first conversations Dan and I had the week I started was, what do you want to do?

What do you want this to look like? I mean, doing it all right now, what would you like me to kind of slowly hand the reins over to you on? And so there's particular things I'm interested in. There's particular strengths that I have. There's particular strengths that Dan has and things he's interested in.

And I think we're able to just really, through clear communication, kind of mesh those together. And so it's a little bit of everything, honestly, I think I'm involved in most pieces of the process and not just kind of pigeonholed in paperwork or tax planning or one specific thing, but it's really holistic view of financial planning,

**Caleb Brown:** What's been the biggest obstacle making this transition from student to professional, the hardest thing for you to overcome thus far?

**Christopher Lee:** I think in a classroom, whether it's high school, college or an extracurricular activity, an internship, I've found it easy my entire life to just kind of float towards the top.

'Cause everyone's on a similar playing field. So to go one step up is, it's not that difficult, but going into a career, interacting with someone every day who's been doing this for 15 years, and so there's absolutely a knowledge hierarchy there. And I think knowing that I'm—it's funny in Salesforce, Dan's name is Master Jedi, I think, and mine is Young Padawan.

**Daniel Tobias:** And Chris did that to be clear. Chris did that.

**Christopher Lee:** Dan had Master Jedi there. And I saw that—

**Daniel Tobias:** You're right.

**Christopher Lee:** I'll add young Padawan, which is silly, but that's truly what this is. Like this is a role where for at least the first year, Dan is the technical expert.

So I find them having to go to someone else almost every single day versus creating an environment where people can go to me. I think that's changing. And that will continue to change as I learn more and develop expertises. But that was definitely tricky being in an environment where I just was not able to rise to the top spot as quickly.

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**Caleb Brown:** And maybe expand on that a little bit, like your role with clients. I mean, are you interacting with these people? Are you bringing in clients? What are you doing there?

**Christopher Lee:** Not bringing any clients yet. That's a long term goal of mine. Sitting in on just about every single meeting, kind of acting as a backup to Dan. I'll mention things that were glossed over or things like that, sending more and more emails to clients and just trying to be more hands on in the whole process.

But for now, Dan's definitely doing most of the leading in the meetings and then I'm there as a note taker slash secondary type person.

**Daniel Tobias:** And I'd say that is already starting to change. So I think it was the very last meeting we had, it was on Zoom. And one of the things we needed to do was log in with the client to their 401k to pull some stuff down.

So Chris did that research in advance when we started the meeting, the client logged in, Chris took over that person's screen, did that work while I was able to continue talking to the client about another matter, it didn't work, and then the client had a call. But basically then at that point, Chris had been involved enough in that I'll say fairly administrative nuts and bolts kind of thing that literally the rest of the meeting, we were tag teaming off of each other in terms of what the next thing is. Chris had made like, we didn't have an agenda for this meeting 'cause it was kind of, not quite impromptu, but it was quickly scheduled for the purpose of this administrative task.

So Chris had put together the short list of other things that we might want to try and talk about while we were on the line. And so Chris was keeping me honest with respect to that, speaking to some of them on his own, right? And as we continue to progress, we do a lot of tax prep, and so we're getting an attack season now.

So we're, we'll be sitting down with most of our clients. Some might call it a surge or a season. And so as we're going through this, Chris is going to be taking lead on more and more and more aspects of these meetings. Whereas last year it was kind of like he was just taking notes. I was handing him and telling him what this stuff is.

And now we've come full circle where he will literally take it and own as he did in that meeting. Hey, great, where I'm going through this on my own, things are happening over there. We will come back. We will talk with the client and we will be able to tag team with Chris owning specific pieces and interacting directly with the clients.

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**Caleb Brown:** Love that, man. What a great story. And let's go back just a little bit more, Dan. How did you initially introduce him to the clients?

**Daniel Tobias:** We did announce you're joining us, right, Chris?

**Christopher Lee:** I believe so. Yes, in a quarterly letter.

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah, quarterly letter. Yeah. So I am a believer in less is more. I'm not the kind of advisor who will send out a note when the market goes down or when there's a shock of some kind. So the quarterly letter is typically the only real mass communication we've got. So that's four. There's probably maybe two other mass emails that go out over the course of the year.

And maybe one of them is tax related, probably going out in a few weeks. So introducing him there, but really just having him in meetings, even, you know, and the goal was always to not have him be silent note taker, but to have him have a role. I don't think I've been as great at that goal as I would have liked. I think there have been plenty of meetings, Chris, correct me if I'm wrong, where you have said virtually nothing because there wasn't a role specified for you in advance. Just, and that's me not doing the things that I'm saying I need to do to support your development. With time though I think that we're getting better at that and that's less and less the case. And so that introducing, it's being present, it's joining even when there's really no need, Chris, for you to join. Sometimes a lot of you join anyways, just for the FaceTime. And then I'd say most importantly is the quarterly letter that went out yesterday, which congratulated Chris to our client base for having passed the CFP exam this past November, which I saw.

**Caleb Brown:** Congratulations.

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah. It's a big deal.

**Christopher Lee:** Thank you.

**Daniel Tobias:** And I saw at least one congratulations from a client, but that specific one was one that has been working with Chris since their day one, their new client. And as far as they're concerned, this is the person they'd been working with. They did not realize, I mean, they knew that Chris was not the lead advisor, but by no means is this client ever experienced Chris as a silent partner in the room either. So, I think with time we're continuing to introduce and bring him in more and better ways.

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**Caleb Brown:** And Chris, how's, I mean, any comments from, I mean, how's that process been for you? I know when I started out, I mean, that was a nerve-wracking experience for me.

**Christopher Lee:** It is nerve-wracking. Dan's mentioned something with imposter syndrome. And so I think he's helped coach me through that a lot. I think he might have more confidence in me than I have in myself. So having someone there to like, "You can do this, you got that," has been, I think, will continue to be a big piece and getting me up even more to speed.

**Caleb Brown:** And you mentioned you passed the CFP, again, congratulations. Anything else that you're working on? I mean, any other skills that you think you need to develop or, I mean, could be technical, could be managerial, could be relational?

**Christopher Lee:** I think one that comes to mind right now is seeing the big picture. You can understand a client's property and casualty insurance, well, or their tax picture or investments, but marrying them all together, not only in a cadence of client communication, but just from a planning perspective, I think that's an art and that's something that definitely comes with experience.

**Caleb Brown:** Yeah. A lot of times it's just reps, right? I mean, we've kind of touched on that throughout the episode. Dan, I want to come back to you. Then we'll come back to you, Chris. I want to get your input on this, and you guys have talked a little bit about this, but can you point to one or two things why has it worked so well the last year?

**Daniel Tobias:** Gosh, that's a great question. I think, Caleb, I think a lot of that credit goes to the two of us, Chris and I, but I think a lot of that credit also goes to you for putting us together and recognizing a good match in terms of melding of personalities and things like that. And yeah, I think we have been, both of us, mindful with respect to blind spots and things we can do better and ways to communicate and all of those kinds of good things.

But I think ultimately, I think it's just effort being put in all the way around to make it good and strong. And it's something we haven't talked about or the long term plans of Passport and what that means for Chris in terms of equity. I don't know if that matters. but my goal is that Chris be here for his career, for the duration, right?

And so hopefully, I won't put words in his mouth. Hopefully, that's his goal as well. and so with that being the end framework, the end goal in mind, it's, "Okay, great. How do we get there?" And that's a lot easier to, I think, plan for and manage for in terms of working well in the first year, than, "Great, what busy work can I give you? Because I just got to get something off my plate."

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**Caleb Brown:** Chris, what do you think? What, why does it work so well the last year?

**Christopher Lee:** I agree with everything that Dan said. I think I'll add one more thing is honesty and open communication. Dan is a very honest dude, and I am someone who really appreciates candid feedback, and I think that pairing has made it work really well.

There could be interpersonal conflict in any office, but I think because we are both so honest with each other, nothing ever boils up, which is a really good thing in an office. And yeah, just to double down Dan's point, I think we're just a very good personality fit. We enjoy the same things and it's fun to just talk outside of financial planning because we have the same interests.

**Caleb Brown:** Most fun part of the job. I mean, you've been doing this job for a year now outside of the internships. What's been the funnest part of it?

**Christopher Lee:** I really like helping people, and that's so cliché, and I'm probably the 100th person to say that on a podcast like this one, but it is really stinking amazing.

It's a great reason to wake up in the morning doing work that you're not helping the bottom line of some large corporation, but you're helping John and Jane Doe afford a trip to Europe, or send their child to college, and that's just, that's a great reason to get into the office each morning, so those few moments. They don't happen every day, they're not always incredibly clear to see, especially only being here for one year, but those moments scattered throughout are really great.

**Caleb Brown:** I really appreciate you guys coming on and sharing all this. This is really a cool story. I mean, Dan, any final tips that you might have for the New Planner audience?

**Daniel Tobias:** Yeah, I guess I'll speak to firm owners and let Chris speak to new planners. So, so I was listening to a Kitces & Carl podcast recently, and I don't even know if it was a new one, so good luck finding if it was recent or not. It might've been like months old. And they were talking about a breakdown in the process.

I think getting drinks in a meeting and the process didn't say for the person to ask if the client would want drinks because whoever wrote the process thought that was just general hospitality and they should just know, and fine, and all the things there, but I think it was Carl Richards who made the point of it wasn't the person's fault for not thinking of drinks.

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It was the problem was in the process and that the process didn't plan for that, right? and so I think, something, throughout this and Caleb, you asked how it's worked so well, something that I find myself consciously working on is when we do have these little, like, I'll say learning moments and opportunities and things like that, where something doesn't go quite right.

I'd like to believe I've never, Chris, blamed you. I'd like to believe I blamed myself not for managing it bad or telling you the wrong or anything like that, but just for simply not laying out the expectation or laying out what needs to happen. And so I think as owner, a manager, the boss, whatever the word is.

I have found myself consciously focusing on that a lot over the last year in terms of, okay, what is it that I can do, say, instruct, write, orient, whatever, to make it more clear as to what it is I want, or we need the desired outcome to be.

**Caleb Brown:** Yeah. Really good stuff. Chris, what about you? Any final tips for new planners?

**Christopher Lee:** Yeah, a friend, who's not in the planning industry, but I think it relates well to this field, friend gave me this piece of advice that is your 20s are for learning and your 30s are for earning. I'll just speak to the 20s part. I think it's pretty self explanatory but I'll put some color to it.

There is so much to learn in this field, you have to be an expert in tax planning and investments and insurance and so many other different things. And that just takes, that takes a lot of reps. And so part of the reason why I ended up at Passport is because I thought I could learn and grow the most at this place, and I still feel that way a year in, so that's my goal in the next couple years is just develop myself as much as I can.

And hopefully, that investment in myself is going to pay dividends 20 years from now, not the 5,000 extra dollars in salary that you could have gotten going with a different firm. So yeah, that would be my piece of advice.

**Caleb Brown:** Thanks for coming on the show guys.

**Daniel Tobias:** Thank you.

**Christopher Lee:** Appreciate it.



## **Ep #218: 1 Year into a Financial Planner Career with Daniel Tobias and Christopher Lee**

Thanks for joining us for this episode of the New Planner Podcast. If you are ready to discover the top career paths for financial planners and see which track is best for you, we created a free guide to help you.

Grab your copy of the Financial Planner Career Roadmap at [newplannerrecruiting.com/roadmap](https://newplannerrecruiting.com/roadmap).

There, you'll also find more tools and resources all created to help you build a successful financial planning career.

Tune back in next week for another episode, and until then, we are here to help you succeed.