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Jay's journey to a career in financial planning and becoming an entrepreneur is both a lesson and inspiration.

Jay Mallari, QAFP®, BA, has certainly taken many roads to get to the position he is in now as a Financial Planner and President of Cambria Wealth Management in Surrey, British Columbia. Every step in his journey has reflected determination and drive, not to mention his amazing life partner and founder of Cambria, Jay's wife April. Jay is a walking, thriving best practice in action and inspiration to all Canadians including new Canadians who are considering financial planning as a career.

You've covered a lot of ground getting to where you are. Describe your journey.

I grew up in the Philippines, moved to Toronto in the 90s and then went home again. A few years later, in 2012, I came back with my family and got into the insurance and wealth advisory business. It was a tough go without Canadian experience. But a little luck helped and I was picked up by a large insurance and wealth management company. They were looking for entrepreneurial candidates. I worked hard, attracted clients and then I got a management role offer, in part thanks to my cultural insights. That solidified my opportunity and my path.

> **MY QAFP CERTIFICATION GAVE ME THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE TO SIT IN FRONT OF CLIENTS AND HELP THEM WITH ALL THEIR FINANCIAL NEEDS.**

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What is the difference between a transactional business and a relationship business?

When you're in this business and running after the money, it's going to be the most difficult hundred thousand dollars you ever earn. You'll get doors slammed in your face. If you do it to service the client and provide value – not just to the person in front of you but for generations to come – you'll be valued, respected and welcomed. That's the difference between transactional and relationship. I can do product and related services by phone. You can't do empathy, hand-holding and genuine advice the same way.

> I USE MY RELATIONSHIP SKILLS EVERY DAY - HELPING CLIENTS FIND THE RIGHT TRACK AND STAY ON IT.

What does having your QAFP certification do for you?

Getting my QAFP certification gave me the technical skills and the relationship knowledge to help me focus more and more on full client relationships and needs. That's well beyond transactional or product-focused advice. Because I'm client-facing every day now, I use my relationship skills every day, helping my clients find the right track and stay on it. I learned how to do that with every step I took in my career starting way back - my QAFP certification education helped me hone those skills and provide value at a deeper level. It gave me the knowledge and confidence to sit in front of clients and help them with all their financial planning needs. And this becomes more and more important as your business matures and your clients go through life.

How does tapping into your culture help your business?

Here's an example: We were living in a condo in Vancouver many years ago. The maintenance person was Filipino. He was in the medical field at home - here, he was a condo maintenance guy. And life was a struggle. He found out what we did and started asking questions. We gave him answers. And today, he has a home and he's earning six figures as a registered nurse. He says that wouldn't have happened without us. Not the products we helped him acquire - but as a result of the relationship we created with him.

Any closing thoughts?

When you look at studies, on women as clients and on new Canadians or different cultures too, they don't ask questions. They don't want to seem like they don't know or look a certain way. We took that thought a step further - not just with Filipinos but with many other immigrant populations. They feel like they can't be heard or that the planner in front of them can't possibly understand what they are going through. At Cambria, we tick all the boxes. We look like the people we serve. We understand the cultural implications of being new to Canada and navigating your financial life here. We look like the future. And that's an opportunity for all new planners.

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