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The Daily Brief: Behind the Screen

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Just as an advisor should do due diligence on the investment managers he or she uses, prospective client's are being encouraged to screen their

financial advisor before they hand over their money. Steven Abernathy and Brian Luster write on Forbes.com that prospects should ask potential advisors the following questions: Where are your investments? Why are you making that recommendation? And will you sign a fiduciary oath?

The Smart Money's Dumb Year

It's been said, many times, many ways that picking stocks to outperform the market is a fool's errand, as many fund managers discovered in 2014; what was supposed to go down went up, and vice versa. [Bloomberg Businesweek](#) breaks down how the main indices were driven by a handful of big stocks. For example, Apple, Intel and Microsoft all rose by more than 20 percent in 2014, while Amazon and Twitter, holders each of huge 2013 gains, dipped 26 and 45 percent, respectively. The S&P 500 only rose less than 7 percent, while the Russell 2000 and Dow Jones Internet Composite indices both dropped more than 2 percent each. "It's been a really confusing year," said Kim Forrest, an analyst at Fort Pitt Capital Group in Pittsburgh.

Invest in Truthiness

"The Colbert Report," a satirical late-night talk show starring Stephen Colbert's ultra-conservative political pundit character, ended its nine-year run on Thursday night. The popular show won a number of awards including two Peabody Awards, and news outlets spent Friday celebrating the show's impact. MarketWatch even used some of Colbert's popular segments to create five rules of investing: don't make things too complicated, don't ignore facts that contradict your views, avoid home-country bias, beware of star-manager risk, and, of course, diversify.

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