

# INTRODUCTION TO ESTATE PLANNING

The Get Started Guide  
Part 1: Roles and Responsibilities



## **Introduction to Estate Planning**

Estate Planning is an essential component of your overall financial plan. It allows you to gain more control over aspects of your life both during your lifetime and after your death. The goal of this document is to prepare you for the questions that will be asked by your financial advisor as it relates to your estate plan. Five major decisions go into each estate plan. Those decisions are described below, along with examples and a description of people in your life that may be up to the task.

### **1) Beneficiaries**

This is WHO will get your assets when you pass away. Generally, if you have children, we see to it that things go to your children in equal shares. However, there are also opportunities to leave things to charity (via a specific dollar amount after death) or to other loved ones.

### **2) Method of Distribution**

This is HOW your beneficiaries will get everything when you pass away. Depending on your beneficiaries' age and financial capabilities, you may wish to delay distributions to a beneficiary. For example, for young beneficiaries, we often see clients give it in stages (1/3 at 25, 1/3 at 30, and 1/3 at 35). Please keep in mind that those young beneficiaries will have immediate access to funds for health care, education, and support. If you have a beneficiary with special health needs, you can leave assets for them through a special needs trust.

### **3) Successor Trustee/Executor/Financial Power of Attorney**

This person (or people) will make financial decisions for you if you cannot. The type of person who makes a good trustee is someone who is financially responsible, would handle finances similarly to you, and is generally a good decision-maker. You can consider a professional trustee if you don't have a family member or friend to choose from. Generally, 2-3 successors are named (in order of preference).

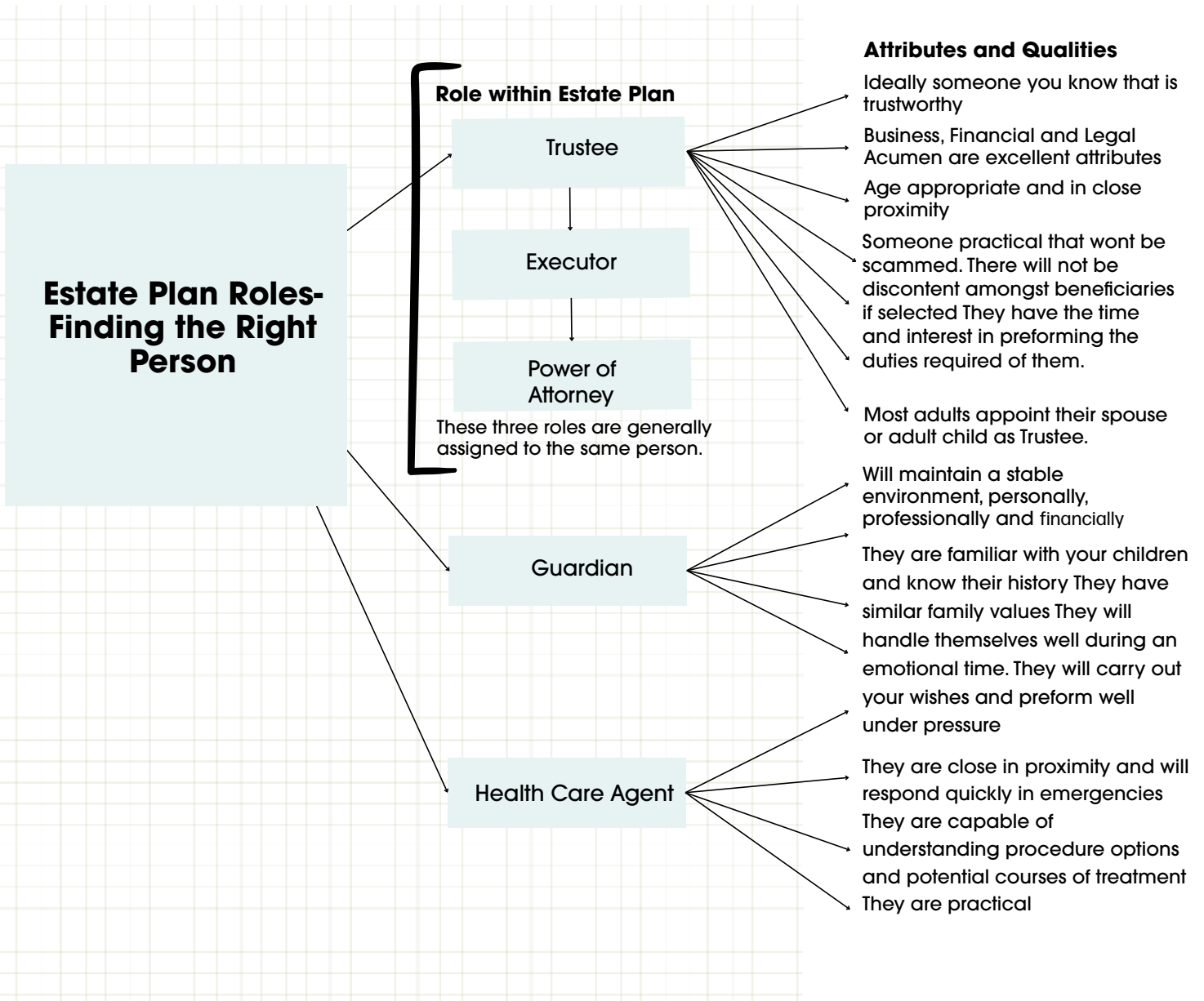
### **4) Health Care Power of Attorney**

This person (or people) will make health care decisions for you if you cannot. The type of person you name here would need to be able to make decisions during a difficult and emotional time. You will have the ability to state your end-of-life and organ donation wishes in this document as well. Generally, 2-3 successors are named (in order of preference).

### **5) Guardian (if necessary)**

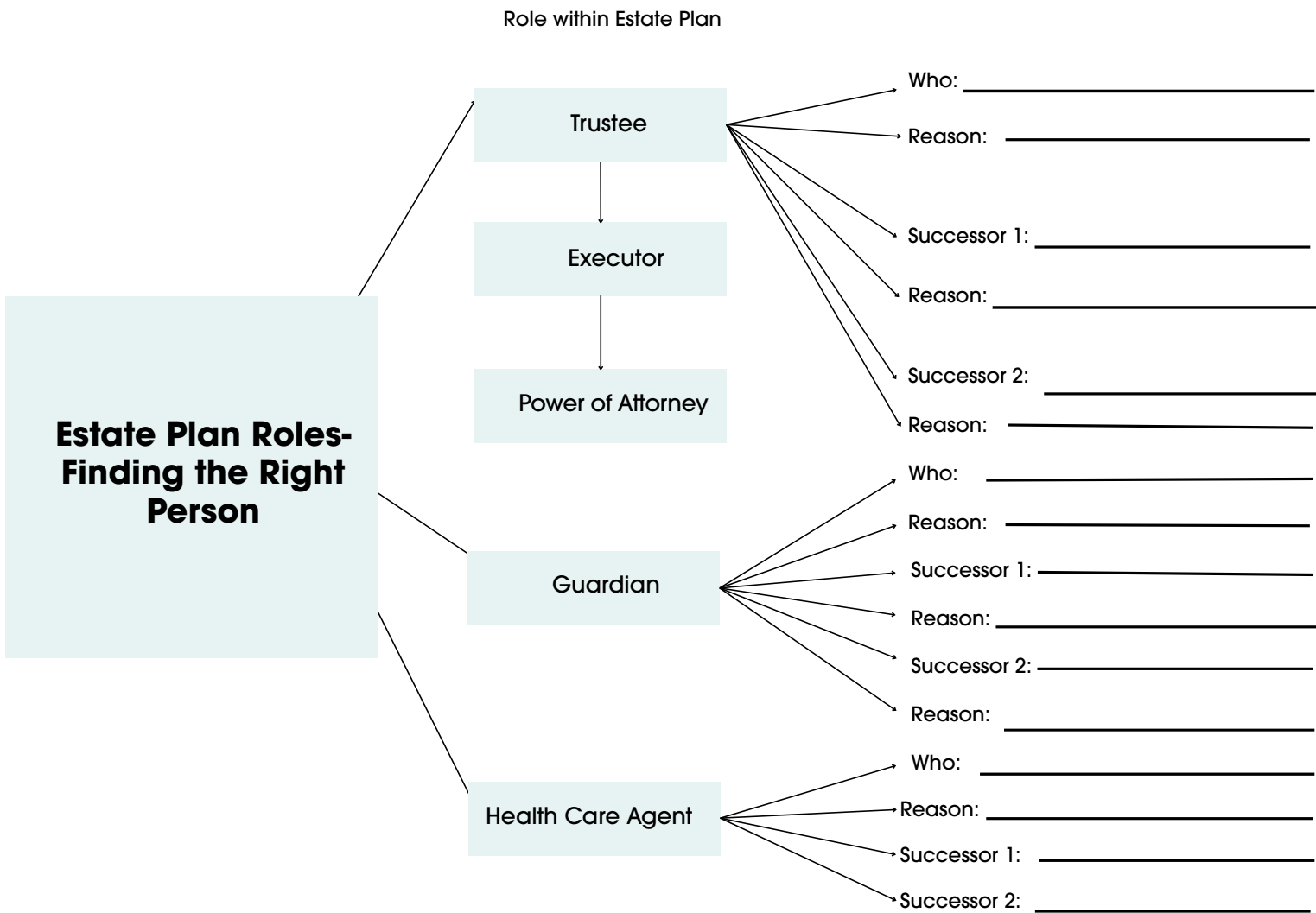
This is the person (or people) who will have legal custody of any minor children should you pass away. The guardian will work with the trustee to access funds for any minor children. We often see your parents, siblings, or dear friends named here. We also see other children you have that are over the age of 18 named here. Generally, 2-3 successors are named (in order of preference).

Use this guide to help fill in the worksheet on the following page.



Use this page to write down your initial thoughts on who should be involved in the process. Don't worry about who will fill each role. That will be clarified later. This exercise should help reveal the team of people around you that would be willing to help in a crisis and after death. Use this page to help organize your thoughts and write down any questions that come to mind.

Fill out this worksheet before your meeting. Ask questions if needed. It is better to pick the right person vs. any person.



# Next Steps

Once your questionnaire is complete or if questions arise, contact Clever Fox Financial for next steps.

- Once we clarify WHO is doing WHAT in the estate plan, we will help clarify WHAT is going WHERE and WHEN that will happen.
- If you have not done so, you will be asked to fill out a comprehensive questionnaire that lists WHAT you own as part of your estate. This will be reviewed by Clever Fox Financial to best determine which path is right for you.
- Together we will discuss the scope of what we can accomplish, consulting fees, and potential fees for auxiliary services (such as deed transfer, notary services, or the need for legal services for more complex estates.
- Clever Fox Financial does not provide tax or legal advice.



## Contact:

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