

Call for Papers: Beyond the Portfolio: What Additional Skills and Behavioural Competencies Do Investment Professionals Need Today?

The editorial board of VBA Journaal invites authors to submit contributions for a special issue on the broader role of the investment professional. The traditional investor whose expertise centres on asset allocation, security selection and risk management is no longer sufficient.

Today's wealth manager, portfolio manager, adviser or investment professional operates amid a complex interplay of behavioural finance, geopolitics, social media, customer experience (CX), ESG, operational execution, legal and regulatory challenges, communication requirements and the strict MiFID requirements on appropriateness and suitability. Clients, regulators, the media and society expect more.

- Which additional skills and behavioural competencies have become even more essential over time?
- How can professionals combine analytical rigour with behavioural insights, an understanding of risk preferences, political and social awareness, ESG expertise, strong communication and a keen eye for the client experience, while also delivering the best returns?

We welcome both academic analyses and practice-oriented contributions that explore this broadening of the profession. Examples of article topics include:

- **Behavioural finance as a core competency:** how does knowledge of biases, heuristics, mental accounting and risk preferences translate into better decision-making and better client conversations?
- **Communication skills under pressure:** how do you explain complex investment decisions, setbacks and uncertainty to clients, board members, the media and regulators?
- **The investor as a "politician":** geopolitical skills, scenario thinking and interpreting political risks in portfolios and client communications.
- **Social media and reputational risk:** how do platforms, influencers and rapid information sharing affect the work of investment professionals, and what media and communication skills are needed?
- **The multi-skilled professional:** what combination of hard and soft skills distinguishes successful investment professionals today?
- **Case studies from practice:** organisations that have successfully broadened their competencies, or struggled to do so, including in behavioural finance and MiFID compliance.
- **Looking ahead:** which skills will become even more important over the next five to ten years, such as AI literacy, systems thinking and stakeholder management?
- **Assessing risk preferences in practice:** how reliable are current methods for determining willingness and capacity to take risk, and which new approaches improve the quality of suitability assessments?
- **ESG as an integrated competency:** knowledge of frameworks, together with the ability to communicate values, trade-offs and impact to different stakeholders.
- **Appropriateness and suitability under MiFID:** how can behavioural insights contribute to more robust and defensible assessment processes?

- **Customer experience (CX) in wealth management:** from investment performance alone to the overall service experience — what skills does this require of professionals?

We aim to bring together a wide range of perspectives and insights. Your contribution can help deepen our understanding of the changes currently taking place between active and passive investing and provide greater insight into future developments.

Acceptance Criteria

- Originality and relevance to the theme
- Depth of analysis and supporting evidence
- Practical implications for industry professionals
- Clarity and accessibility of presentation
- (Very) limited use of artificial intelligence; the content must primarily be the original work of the author(s).

We encourage both academics and practitioners to contribute.

We invite interested authors to send an abstract (half an A4 page) of their proposed contribution to the editorial board (irma.willemsen@cfasociety.nl) before 15 November 2026. Contributions must be original work that has not been published elsewhere. Articles may be submitted in either English or Dutch.

For further information on author guidelines and examples of previous publications, please visit our website <https://cfasociety.nl/en/vbajournaal>.