



The Rep Chronicles

Ensuring a
Smooth Transition

Two top Reps based in our Edison, NJ, office reflect on the ease and simplicity of ESI's Rep transition process.

Nico Rivero, CFP™ has 25 years in the business, with a focus on investment products. His partner, **Jeff Friedrich**, is a 16-year veteran who complements the partnership with insurance solutions to help meet their clients' financial goals. They formerly served together at a large carrier for many years before bringing their combined expertise and synergies to National Life Insurance Company and Equity Services, Inc. (ESI) as a team.

How was your experience in transitioning to National Life and ESI?

■ **NICO:** Equity Services was tremendous at moving over all of our business. They did everything from soup to nuts. They prepped all of our paperwork, pushed everything out in the mail, we scrubbed it all up and they took care of the rest. That's why we were able to bring every client we wanted to and didn't lose a single one in the process.¹

■ **JEFF:** I would just add the huge plus of National Life assigning one dedicated person to us to handle everything, yet we had access to the full team if needed too. Whenever we called, they picked up the phone. That's a big difference you don't find in other companies. What we thought would take six months or longer was done in less than four.

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Did your product focus or selling strategy change after joining National Life and ESI?

■ **JEFF:** A little, and for the better. I'm primarily still focused on the insurance side, and National Life distinguishes itself in the market with its living benefits. In my previous world, these were never offered and we didn't look beyond this world to find them. Living benefits are a big deal for me for many reasons, mostly because they can do so much good for our clients going through difficult times.

■ **NICO:** My productivity has gone up immensely since moving to National Life. It's all about the ease of doing business. I was a consistent producer for many years at another carrier, but never made Chairman's Club.³ Since joining National Life, I haven't missed a single one. And Jeff and I are both on track for it and other educational conferences this year as well.

¹ Actual results may vary.

² Living Benefits are provided by no additional premium Accelerated Benefit Riders. Riders are supplemental benefits that can be added to a life insurance policy and are not suitable unless you also have a need for life insurance. Riders are optional and may not be available in all states or on all products. This is not a solicitation of any specific insurance policy.

³ Membership is based on sales criteria.

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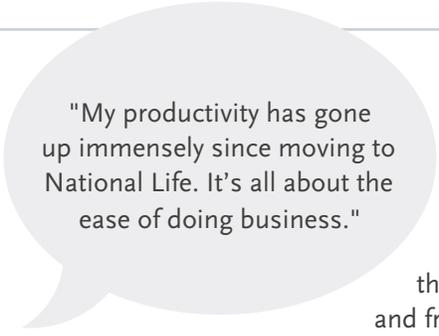
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Has joining National Life sharpened your focus on certain client profiles or demographic?

■ **JEFF:** It gives me the tools I need to do what I do well. After so many years in the business, most of my clients are now referrals. As it happens, I don't work with a lot of millennials right now. I may sound like one (laughing), but I'm not. But if I had to pick one age group I serve most, it's 35- to 50-year-olds. These folks need insurance for a number of reasons and it's still reasonably priced for them. But we never push anyone away. If they are referred to us and we can help them, we will.

■ **NICO:** Same here. The average age of my clients is late 50s to early 60s, on the cusp of retirement. Regardless, we meet with every client by leveraging eMoney. After an analysis, we use somewhat of 3-step approach, where the first step is the discovery interview. I never go to clients with any product solutions in the first meeting, ever. When I first meet you, I'm not interested in product, and you shouldn't be either. National Life gives us the space and leeway we need to take our time, and that's huge in the long run.



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How would you mentor new Reps whose first job is with ESI?

■ **JEFF:** A lot of newbies are reluctant to approach their "Project 100," the core group of their closest family and friends. I tell them that if they are not getting financial products from you, they're getting them from someone else. I also coach them that you have to latch on to an advisor mentor, someone successful. And they should help their mentors with reaching out to smaller clients that they may not have time to contact themselves. Start building relationships now or you never will.

■ **NICO:** I tell them that you can't start in this business on your own, and you have to be part of a team. If you're not, you're bound to fail. Unless you have such a tremendous natural marketplace, which no one really does. They may think they do, but they really need to cultivate and build one over time, starting now. That's why teaming up is the way to go. The age of the solo practitioner is really a dinosaur. You just can't survive as a solo practitioner, young or old, because there is so much potential business left on the table.

Nico Rivero, CFP, started his career in financial services in 1993 and has worked for two leading life insurance companies before transitioning to the role of Agency Director in 2001. In this role, he successfully built and led a unit of high performing financial services representatives. Nico stepped out of a formal leadership position in 2006 to focus his energy on building his financial planning practice but continues to mentor junior associates in a Functional Manager role. Nico has spoken to employees of large and small businesses regarding their benefit plans and retirement planning needs. In August, 2016, Nico joined Equity Services Inc., where he continues to maintain his practice. He is a President's Club, Chairman's Club, ESI Elite Symposium, and ESI Circle of Excellence qualifier.⁴

Jeff Friedrich launched his career in the financial services industry in 2002. Over the past 16 years, he spent half of that time as an Agency Sales Director. In this role he successfully built and led a unit of high performing financial services representatives. Jeff stepped out of a formal leadership position into a Financial Advisor role to focus his energy on building his practice but continues to mentor junior associates in the firm. In August, 2016, Jeff joined Equity Services Inc., to continue to manage his practice. He is a President's Club, Chairman's Club, ESI Elite Symposium, and ESI Circle of Excellence qualifier.⁴

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⁴ Membership is based on sales criteria.