

EPISODE SUMMARY:

In this episode of the Rainmaker Podcast, host Gui Costin sits down with Daniel Noonan, Executive Vice President and Head of Wealth Management Consulting at Cohen & Steers, to explore what it takes to lead and scale a top-tier distribution team in today's evolving investment landscape. With more than two decades of experience at firms like Nuveen, PIMCO, and State Street Global Advisors, Daniel brings a thoughtful, measured approach to sales strategy, team leadership, and client engagement.

Daniel offers an inside look at how Cohen & Steers is expanding beyond its core REIT franchise into private real estate, retirement solutions, and most recently, active ETFs. With a 50-person U.S. wealth distribution team, the firm is structured to stay agile while maintaining deep relationships across channels including RIAs, wirehouses, independent broker-dealers, and private banks.

A central theme in the conversation is intentional sales process. Daniel emphasizes the importance of identifying the right advisor profile—those who embrace active management, endowment-style portfolio construction, and value in real assets. The firm leverages CRM technology, specifically Salesforce, as a “force multiplier,” empowering the sales team with data, segmentation, and efficiency to spend more time with high-potential clients. He stresses that success comes from combining the “art” of client engagement with the “science” of targeting and tracking.

Daniel also discusses the challenges and opportunities of new client acquisition, particularly in the fast-growing but complex RIA channel. He advocates for a consultative, business-minded approach, focused less on product pushing and more on providing value—whether that's market insight, operational advice, or branding strategy.

On leadership, Daniel defines his style as collaborative, present, and servant-oriented. He believes in staying close to the business and investing time with his team to remove roadblocks and reinforce shared goals. He encourages open communication across levels, structured reporting, and measurable goals that prioritize effort and process over uncontrollable outcomes.

For young professionals, his advice is to be a “student of the game”—stay curious, work hard, and differentiate yourself through depth and breadth of knowledge. His biggest challenge today? Focus. With multiple initiatives underway, Daniel's priority is maintaining clarity on what matters most and building infrastructure to support that focus. This episode is a masterclass in strategic sales leadership and thoughtful organizational growth.