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Your 90 Day Roadmap for Creating Outrageous Success

A Financial Advisor's Guide to Happier Clients, Increased
Marketing Results, More Freedom and Greater Profits

Written by:

Rob Brown
Founder | Head Coach
EncoreAdvisor.com

An online community of successful Financial Advisors.

Overview:

Financial advisors who strive for outrageous success always stand apart from the crowd. They don't allow themselves to become victims of circumstances. Instead, they look to the future with optimism, and set an activity-based course for realizing their visions. Some of these visions may seem small, while others may appear unattainable, but when they are combined with a commitment to consistent success habits the end result is nothing short of spectacular.

It's NOT about taking shortcuts...

When it comes to growing your business, true shortcuts are rare, but there is an alternative. You can implement simple business development strategies that produce meaningful results over surprisingly short periods of time. You may have to follow a set of directions, but a quick payoff usually reinforces the activity and keeps you from skipping steps.

Amazing results can be achieved in as little as 90 days!

This book walks you through the process for combining your vision and your success habits with our 90 day roadmap for achieving outrageous success. This is a worthwhile exercise for any financial professional. Use this straightforward approach to re-energize your business and move to new levels of success – outrageous success!

About the Author:

This book was written by Rob Brown, founder of EncoreAdvisor.com. Rob specializes in helping financial advisors achieve new levels of success. He has coached, trained and mentored advisors for over twenty-four years. All of his work is supported by his website, www.encoreadvisor.com, an online community for successful financial advisors.

Learn More:

If you would like to learn even more about the topics presented in this book, feel free to visit www.EncoreAdvisor.com. Our membership-based website contains a unique combination of tools, tips and actionable strategies designed specifically for financial advisors. You're welcome to take a test-drive by signing up for a **14 day trial membership**.

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Hello, my name is Rob Brown.

I'm committed to helping you build happier client relationships, more freedom and greater profits.

During my 24 year career I have always been a successful producer and valued mentor.

My background also includes executive management with a full-service financial services firm. My responsibilities focused on **helping advisors grow their practices through coaching, training, fee-based initiatives, technology enhancements and wealth management.**

I have defined all of my roles with the belief that the advisor is the ultimate determinate of success of any financial services organization. Find ways to make the advisor more effective in building and maintaining client relationships and **the client, firm and advisor will all benefit.**

Through my one-of-a-kind website, www.encoreadvisor.com, and personal coaching engagements, I have worked with advisors from dozens of broker-dealers. My corporate relationships have included engagements with **Scott & Stringfellow, Sterne Agee, Morgan Stanley, Merrill Lynch, H.D. Vest, John Hancock, MFS, Century Securities, Commonwealth Financial, Securities America and Sentinel Investments.**

I have been a speaker at Securities Industry and American Banker Association events. Early in my career, I was a regular financial columnist for the Richmond Times-Dispatch and contributing author to Horsesmouth.com. I have been quoted in On Wall Street and Information Week magazines.

I am a graduate of Randolph-Macon College with a degree in economics and business. I also completed a course of study through the Securities Industry Institute at the Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania.

I have been married for 23 years. My wife and I are blessed with triplet daughters who are college.

Thanks for purchasing my book. I know you'll be able to use this straightforward approach to practice management to re-energize your business and move to new levels of success – outrageous success!

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Our clients are achieving outrageous success...

"I know how to manage money and work with my clients, but I was looking for more. Rob Brown is my personal coach. I don't make a strategic decision without checking with him first. My business was growing steadily, but it has really picked up steam since implementing his strategies. I was stuck on how to market my services and was trying different and costly efforts on my own. Rob's common sense strategies have placed me on a whole new growth level."

**Ron - CFP, CPA
Investment Advisor
Iowa**

"Rob, I just finished one of your Web Classes (90 Day Roadmap), it was AWESOME! You share practical ideas and then give step-by-step ideas on how to make it work. The ideas from this class alone are worth the price of membership. You need to raise your prices."

**Greg - CPA/PFS, CFP
Wealth Manager
California**

"Over the past twelve months, my business is up more than 60%. Your ideas are now a regular part of my routine... Making the ideas actionable is key!"

**Dennis
Morgan Stanley
Alabama**

"What a difference a month can make. Just one of the ideas you gave me during our last coaching call resulted in over \$20,000 in new revenues plus I now have more than \$300,000 in the pipeline. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!"

**Laura
Raymond James
Florida**

"Thank you for the "Creating Outrageous Success" presentation at our conference. I came back with tons of fresh ideas that we plan to implement. My boss was thoroughly impressed."

**Jo Ellen
Sales Assistant
Securities America**

Part One: Creating Outrageous Success

"When people with real talent approach any endeavor, they look for a method, a process, that will lead to success. Then they follow that process every day. They set themselves up to succeed."

Bob Rotella, Life Is Not a Game of Perfect

Key learning points:

Outrageous success is the result of turning the unique visions you have for your business into meaningful success habits. Although outrageous success may be quantified by production and asset gathering achievements, it's not always measurable in financial terms.

You might hit the mark by:

- Building a winning team
- Greatly expanding your referral sources
- Cornering a high net worth niche market
- Delivering world class client service
- Spending more time with your family

What's more, one outrageous success leads to many others. Some may be planned while others may appear to come out of the blue. You move from "just working" to building a business from which you will continuously draw great pride.

Setting the Stage for Outrageous Success

Outrageous success may sound, well...outrageous, but it should be the goal of every financial advisor and team.

Outrageous success is the result of turning the unique visions you have for your business into meaningful success habits. Although outrageous success may be quantified by production and asset gathering achievements, it's not always measurable in financial terms.



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What's more, one outrageous success leads to many others. Some may be planned while others may appear to come out of the blue. You move from "just working" to building a business from which you will continuously draw great pride.

Are you having outrageous success?

You may not use the term outrageous success, but your "big wins" during the past 12 months almost certainly qualify. Any achievement that is the result of **applying predetermined success habits to your vision for the future is an outrageous success.**

- The leap in your fee-based revenue
- The successful retirement of one of your clients
- The positive returns of your core investment portfolio
- The exotic two week vacation you took with your family

All of these milestones could meet your definition for outrageous success.

Advisors who strive for outrageous success look to the future with optimism, and set an activity based course for realizing their visions. Some of these visions may seem small, while others may appear unattainable, but when they are combined with an everyday commitment to measurable success habits the end result is...you guessed it...outrageous.

What if you had an “unexpected” 60% jump in your production?

A couple years ago, during one of my coaching programs, an advisor with a national brokerage firm told me he no longer enjoyed the vision he had for his team and his practice. He admitted he was only focused on reaching higher levels of fees and commissions. Growing his business and his income was still important, but he felt like a sales robot and not like a financial professional who was truly committed to his clients’ success.

We set about creating a vision for outrageous success that included:

- Ramping up his client service
- Only taking on new clients who resembled his **ideal relationships**.

Increased production barely made his list of top priorities!

Next, we decided on a series of success habits designed to help my advisor client realize these twin goals. He and his team put these simple, yet challenging, success habits to work. Twelve months later, the advisor relayed his outrageous success story:

- His client relationships were stronger than ever as evidenced by the fact that the assets he managed for his clients grew by twenty-five percent.
- He was bringing in the right type of new clients because he was receiving an incredible number of referrals.
- AND, to top it all off, his production grew by over 60%.

That was truly an outrageous success!

Should you expect results like these?

Absolutely! But remember, it all begins with having a clear mental image of what you are trying to accomplish and then implementing success habits that are consistent with your view of outrageous success.

Consider these examples:

- If you want to spend less time in the office and more time having fun with your family, get a mental picture of what that will look like and manage your time appropriately. Time and again, **I have helped advisors spend less time in the office and their businesses still grow.**
- If you feel like your prospecting activities are out of control, visualize what they should look like and then work with your team to streamline them. **I help advisors implement limited and targeted sales activities which are always more effective than high-volume, random prospecting.**
- If you want to be your clients “go to” advisor, envision what those relationships need to look like and decide how to marry your daily activities with your vision. In helping advisors put a renewed focus on client service

and communication, I help them quickly and dramatically take their business to the next level.

How do you get started?

To plan for outrageous success, start with your vision.

- Picture yourself and your business twelve months from now, what differences would you like to see?
- What would make you feel outrageously successful?

Your possibilities are only limited by your imagination, so be sure you put them in writing.

What is a "Success Habit"?

Next, decide on specific success habits that will allow you to immediately begin working toward your visions. This is not the stage for wishful thinking, dreaming or hoping. It's a time for tying your action to your visions. **Success habits are regular commitments you make to yourself.** Don't be afraid to challenge yourself.

Simplicity or difficulty shouldn't matter, success habits should take you out of your comfort zone into new activities that open up the possibilities for greater achievement.

Your success habits could be as simple as:

- Making two extra targeted prospecting calls per day to **improve your client acquisition results.**
- Setting a standing weekly date with your spouse to begin **creating greater life balance.**
- **Delivering extraordinary client service** by sending a specified number of handwritten notes to your best clients each day to be sure they receive at least one per quarter.

Your success habits could be more involved:

- Beginning a thorough review of the unique abilities of each member of your team to **better align talents with responsibilities.**
- Setting aside time each day to research your niche market as well as **build a new marketing campaign with a list of pre-qualified prospects.**
- Scheduling time three days per week to visit the gym to be sure you are **taking care of yourself.**

A Success Formula to Triple Your Business

When I was actively running my practice as a financial advisor, I had a simple success formula - **12 by 12, 2 by 5, plan each day**. I used this formula to triple my business over a three year period of time.

What does this formula mean? I committed to recurring success habits:

First, I defined my regular telephone activity. The phone was my primary tool for delivering client service, introducing sales ideas and scheduling appointments with prospects. I committed to contacting 12 clients or prospects by noon each day - **12 by 12**.

Next, by looking back at past periods of success, I determined that it was important for me to have at least 10 appointments per week - **2 by 5**. These could be client reviews or meetings with prospects. My assistant and I made sure my weekly calendar contained at least 10 appointments.

Finally, I realized that my best days were the ones that were most organized, but I wasn't spending time planning my days. My final commitment was to be sure I spent at least 15 minutes planning for each day - **plan each day**. I usually did my planning the first thing in the morning, but it can also be done at the end of the day for the following day.

This is just one example of committing to recurring success habits. Could you create a success formula for your practice?

PLAN and ACT Outrageously

Once you have decided on success habits which will allow you to work toward your visions, the last step is to make it happen - just do it!

- Don't procrastinate or constantly re-think your intentions.
- Don't set unrealistic timeframes for achievement.
- Don't change your vision to accommodate the difficulty which might accompany implementing new activities.

Outrageous success occurs when you keep your focus on your vision by enacting the success habits you have designed to get you there.

Success shouldn't be a surprise

Don't be surprised when outrageous success occurs. Whether you reach a planned milestone or an unexpected result, it wasn't just luck or coincidence if you applied the outrageous success process. Envisioning positive outcomes and keeping your daily commitments to yourself is a powerful combination. Dare to plan and act outrageously, you will be glad you did.

Part Two: Developing a 90 Day Roadmap

Key learning points:

Consider this question...

"Would you be willing to follow a simple set of directions for improving your business if it could produce meaningful results over the next 90 days?"

Time and again I have witnessed, coached and personally achieved new levels of success over relatively short periods of time. Here are a few examples:

- A mid-career advisor is stuck on a production plateau and implements a new client service approach that results in a **quick twenty-five percent jump in commissions and fees.**
- A newer advisor is concerned that many of her prospects aren't financially qualified and develops a more targeted marketing approach which produces a **huge increase in the assets** she manages.
- A weary advisor is tired of working 60 hours a week, so he develops a model day which culminates in significantly **shorter work weeks and a nice boost in revenues.**

Are you willing to commit to a 90 day process that will lead to outrageous success?

Your 90 Days Begins Now

"Did you follow the directions?"

After twenty-two years of marriage, I'm used to this question. Particularly since my 3 daughters have cleverly learned to hide their "told you so" attitude behind sympathetic smiles. Something like, "Daaaddy, why are the directions still in the box?"

Admit it; you know what I mean...

You're adding some new software to your computer and decide the magic of technology will make it work automatically. You don't even need to open the plastic bag with the instructions. The next thing you know, you're constantly "beeping" PC is sending you indecipherable error messages.

And then, to top it all off, someone (spouse, kids, co-worker...) walks into the room and innocently asks if you've "read the directions."

Looking for shortcuts...

From time-to-time, we all look for shortcuts – faster and simpler ways to achieve a goal or finish a meaningful project. Whether we're trying to get in better shape or cook an elaborate meal, we want to believe there is an easier way. Our egos tell us we're smarter than the creator of the fitness program or the writer of the recipe, so we don't need to follow the directions. In the end, if we miss the mark, we have no one to blame but ourselves.

As a financial advisor, you probably receive a regular flow of "direction" for growing your businesses. Sales managers, trainers, mentors, wholesalers, and other outside experts ([EncoreAdvisor.com](http://www.EncoreAdvisor.com) included) all offer solutions for boosting production, servicing clients or managing time. As a recipient of this advice, you believe some of it could be helpful, but you might put it off looking for "a better answer". Sometimes it's because the steps aren't clear, but more often than not it's because you want to outsmart the system. You may be looking for shortcuts to grow your business.

Well, true shortcuts are rare, but there is an alternative. You can implement business development strategies that produce meaningful results over "short" periods of time. You have to follow "the directions", but a quick payoff re-enforces the activity and keeps you from skipping steps.

Ultimately, this process will lead to outrageous success.

Consider this question...

"Would you be willing to follow a simple set of directions for improving your business if it could produce meaningful results over the next 90 days?"

Time and again I have witnessed, coached and personally achieved new levels of success over relatively short periods of time. here are a few examples:

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- A mid-career advisor is stuck on a production plateau and implements a new client service approach that results in a **quick twenty-five percent jump in commissions and fees.**
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- A weary advisor is tired of working 60 hours a week, so he develops a model day which culminates in significantly **shorter work weeks and a nice boost in revenues.**

Results like these aren't hype!

They are perfect examples of achieving outrageous success. It might mean a couple extra hours of effort each week, but the time will be well spent.

Are you willing to give it a try?

Great, let's get started on your "90 Day Roadmap for Creating Outrageous Success". It's a straightforward approach for re-energizing your business and taking it to your next level of achievement.

Two Important Ground Rules

Set aside two hours each week for the next 90 days to work through this process. This could be one two-hour time block, two one-hour settings or four 30 minute sessions. However you decide to break it up put the time blocks on your calendar. Remember, this is an investment in your business, so don't try to squeeze it in when (and if) you find time.

Include your supporting cast. The folks who support you and your business need to understand what you are trying to accomplish. This includes partners, assistants, managers and your family. Your business team will of course be involved in some of the ongoing activities. While your spouse and other family members will be there to offer encouragement.

The best way to work through this 90 day roadmap is to break the steps down into weekly assignments sections. Pace yourself, don't be in a hurry. Fully complete each assignment before you move onto the next one.

Let's get started...

Part Three: Your 90 Day Action Plan

Weeks One and Two

"Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously and never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop this picture!"

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

Key learning points:

Step 1 – Create a mental picture of your success. Don't blindly follow this roadmap. You need to have a clear vision of what success means to you. What lies at the end of your 90 day road? Where do you want to be in twelve months? In five years? For some success may mean more personal income, while others may set their sights on industry benchmarks and still others may want to spend more time with their families.

Step 2 – Develop a few goals that are based your vision. Once you have a mental picture of where you're headed, you need to commit to specific goals. Pull out your current business plan and review your written goals. How does your desire for more income, increased assets or less time in the office translate into measurable results? If necessary, revise your business plan to reflect your new vision.

Step 3 – Review the remainder of this 90 day roadmap. As you familiarize yourself with this process, you'll begin to see how it relates to your personal benchmarks. Based on your business model or your length of time in the industry, some steps may seem redundant or unnecessary, but try not to skip around. Some weeks will be easier than others, but each step will help you realize your personal vision and achieve your goals.

Weeks 1 and 2 – Setting the Stage

Remember - when it comes to achieving significant business growth, there are rarely any shortcuts. But when you're willing to follow a proven plan, you can produce meaningful results over short periods of time. Take some time to review and begin implementing our 90 day roadmap; you'll be on your way to unexpected levels of success – outrageous success!

Your goal for the first two weeks is to set the stage for your success.

Beginning with creating a mental picture of where you want to be at the end of the 90 day process, you will set goals and establish priorities. Don't get carried away, you don't need to create a 50 page business plan. A simple plan you can keep at your fingertips and review each day is all you will need.

Don't forget to think outrageously!

Step 1 – Create a Mental Picture of Your Success.

Don't blindly follow this roadmap. You need to have a clear vision of what success means to you. What lies at the end of your 90 day road? Where do you want to be in twelve months? In five years? For some, success may mean more personal income, while others may set their sights on industry benchmarks and still others may want to spend more time with their families.

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale once said:

"Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously and never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop this picture!"

Before you continue reading, you need to set the stage for a little uninterrupted quiet time:

- Be prepared to stop what you're doing for at least the next 10 minutes
- Tell your assistant you don't want to be disturbed
- Close your office door
- Turn off the ringer on your phone - your cell phone too
- Relax and clear your mind
- Eliminate any negative thinking - this isn't a stupid exercise

Now, it's time for some simple reflection:

- Mentally picture yourself 12 months from now
- Picture the success you will have achieved - no matter how big or small
- Think about how you will look and feel
- Consider both your business and personal lives

Here are a handful of questions to get you started:

1. Have you achieved **special recognition** from your company for your performance? Does your team have a new member? Do you have a new office? Is your practice more profitable?
2. Are your **clients happier**? Is your prospecting more effective? Have you received some meaningful referrals?
3. Are you in **better physical condition**? Have you changed your hairstyle? Do you feel more relaxed and confident?
4. Have spent **more time with family and friends**? Are you living in a new home? Do you have a new vacation spot? Do you have greater personal freedom?
5. Have you been able to **get more involved** with a favorite charity? Are you on the board of a local company or civic organization?

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Don't limit yourself to these questions. In fact, don't limit your thinking in any way. After all, unless you have a mind reader in close proximity, these visions are yours and yours alone.

Think outrageously!

Ready... Go...

Don't cheat yourself... Close your eyes... Allow your mind to explore the possibilities...

Welcome back!

I hope the vision of your future success is allowing you to feel more relaxed and energized. If you have time, you may want to take another few minutes and picture yourself even further out into the future -- 3 years, 5 years, 10 years...

You should truly feel an even greater sense of accomplishment.

Now, you may be thinking, "What's the point?" Well, in my coaching work with financial advisors, no matter which parts of their practices they're trying to improve, the first hurdle is usually creating a mental vision.

There is a natural tendency to avoid the visioning process; it is much easier to allow cynical thoughts and industry truisms to get in the way. Have you ever heard or used these excuses before?

- I'm so busy; I don't have time to set goals and think about the future. No matter what I do, whatever is going to happen is just going to happen.
- I don't know why I'm organizing this seminar. Everybody knows that nobody comes to seminars anymore.
- I know I'm putting in too many hours, but I'm just going to go ahead and work late again tonight. My family wouldn't know what to do with me if I went home early.

Be honest with yourself...

- At the start of this section did you truly stop to picture your future success?
- Was your vision your own or one that you borrowed?
- Were you able to avoid the distractions of negative thinking?

If you struggled with this mental exercise, don't feel alone.

A 50% jump in production!

A couple years ago, I was working with a veteran advisor who was convinced his lack of a disciplined service model had destroyed his client contacts. His solution was to "start all over again by prospecting like crazy." He was unable to picture client success.

My job was to help him put aside this pre-conceived notion and show him how to resuscitate these relationships. Fortunately, one of his first attempts to reach out to a disenfranchised client resulted in a new 6 figure account. This small success changed his vision very quickly and he has subsequently seen his production grow by over 50%.

Breaking the code!

Another client of mine was certain he could not keep up with a rather large number of accounts he had inherited. What's worse, his branch manager had all but told him he, like several of his predecessors, would fail. After implementing a simple campaign he found on my website, the advisor wrote to tell me I had helped him "break the code."

His orphan clients held millions of dollars in assets at other investment firms and they were his for the taking. He is now convinced he will achieve his production goals and his boss is already noticing the results. Only time will tell if this vision becomes a reality, but without a positive outlook this advisor would still be stuck at ground zero.

Short-term vs. long-term

These, of course, are short-term examples, but they lay important groundwork for considering how most long-term successes begin with a positive mental picture. Think about your major personal and professional achievements; odds are they didn't "just happen."

- As your record production year drew nearer and nearer to a close, your vision of accomplishment pushed you even harder to make it a reality.
- The smile on your daughter's face the first time you made it to one of her games propelled you to attend every one of her games despite your busy schedule.
- The accolades you received for helping with a fundraiser at church caused you to take an even more meaningful role in church leadership.

Mental pictures of success, no matter how they may originate in your mind, lay the groundwork for achievement.

Let's end this article where we began, but this time write down your visions. Establish a vivid mental picture of your future success.

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Don't hold back!

- Do you want a mediocre career or do you believe you are one of the best?
- Will you lead a balanced life or will work consume your waking hours?
- Is giving back to your community a platitude or a passion?

The questions are endless, but the answers are yours and yours alone. Your future accomplishments will be dictated by your current beliefs. Challenge yourself to establish a mental picture of outrageous success.

Then just buckle your seat belt and enjoy the ride!

Step 2 – Develop a Few Goals that are Based your Vision.

Once you have a mental picture of where you're headed, you need to commit to specific goals. Pull out your current business plan and review your written goals.

- Is your new vision consistent with your goals?
- Does your plan contain goals that will help you achieve your vision?
- How does your desire for more income, increased assets or less time in the office translate into measurable results?

If necessary, revise your business plan to reflect your new vision. If you don't yet have a business plan, go to Appendix A and use the "Simple Business Planning Tool" to get started. This may add a little time to your 90 day process, but it will be well worth the effort.

A Simple Business Plan

"If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else." - Yogi Berra

The subjects of business plans and setting goals bring mixed reactions from financial advisors. Although most producers agree to their importance, issues such as length, time required and level of detail can cause a lot of disagreement. In the end, this results in too few plans as well as unset and unmet goals.

Consider these quick examples:

One advisor told me that his manager set his goals for 2007 for him; he was simply asked to accept them. Is it realistic to expect that someone else, no matter how well they know you, can set YOUR goals for you?

Another producer lamented the burdensome, 12 page business planning document his home office asked him to complete in less than a week's time. What is more important quantity or quality? Can a meaningful plan be completed in a week if you haven't allocated specific time to complete the process?

A third advisor admitted to starting his business plan 12 months ago and since he still hadn't finished it, wondered if he should start again or just keep going with the same document. Sometimes our own best intentions are interrupted by everyday activities, but does that mean they aren't important?

Planning and setting goals are essential activities in running any successful business, but to be meaningful they must complement, not confuse, the mental picture you have for your practice.

In my view, good planning is turning a draconian routine into a living document that serves as a constant yardstick for measuring achievement and fine tuning future direction.

Think about it...

...Is the 15 page boiler plate plan you have in the bottom of your desk drawer more valuable than the single sheet of paper you keep in the front of your daily planner that lists your goals and priorities?

...Is an arbitrarily established financial goal more important than the note you have attached to your computer screen reminding you of your daily goal for client and prospect contacts?

...Is the unfinished business plan "wizard" more helpful than blocking regular planning time off on your electronic calendar?

The advisor who confidently builds and follows-through on a simple goal and activity based plan is in a much better position than those who labor over a lengthy business planning process without conviction.

Establish your mental picture of success with passion, implement disciplined success habits, regularly monitor your progress and you will have a formula for achievement that rivals the most prolific business plan.

Step 3 – Review the Remainder of This 90 Day Roadmap.

Review the rest of this book; familiarize yourself with the remainder of this process:

- You'll begin to see how achieving outrageous success is possible.
- You'll see how the activities you'll cover over the next 90 days relate to your personal vision and benchmarks.
- Some weeks will be easier than others, but each step will help you realize your personal vision and achieve your goals.
- Based on your business model or your length of time in the industry, some steps may seem redundant or unnecessary, but try not to skip around.

That's it for the first two weeks.

Read the rest of this book, but be sure you complete the first few assignments before you move on to the next steps.

Outrageous success is closer than you think!

Part Three: Your 90 Day Action Plan

Weeks Three through Six

"The important thing is not to stop questioning." - **Albert Einstein**

Key learning points:

Step 4 – Define your ideal client relationship. Top advisors don't allow themselves to become prisoners of unhappy or unsuitable clients. They carefully select their clients by first defining an ideal relationship. This definition is based on an analysis of their existing clients. Take time during this step to update your definition of an ideal client relationship.

Step 5 – Conduct a client profiling campaign. Okay, with your ideal relationship in mind, it's now time to reach out to your clients through a profiling exercise. This step will take the most time during this four week period. You may try to convince yourself that you already know everything you need to know about your clients. But unless you've done a complete update within the last 90 days – you don't. "Stuff" changes all the time and even our best clients have new wants and needs.

Step 6 – Include an advocacy discussion in each of your client profiling meetings. Your clients are your best source of referrals, but to be effective you need to let them know you're open for new business. Simply mention to each client the specific name of at least one person you believe they know personally or professionally. Ask if that person would fit in well with the way you run your practice. Clients enjoy being asked for their opinion.

Weeks 3 through 6 – Focus on Your Current Clients

Welcome back!

I hope you've had time to begin working on your own 90 day roadmap for achieving outrageous success.

Remember our premise, when it comes to making meaningful changes in your business, true shortcuts are rare. But it's possible to achieve significant results over short periods of time when you're willing to "follow the directions".

In other words, adopt a simple plan and stick to it.

If you haven't had time to get started, why not start today? **Go back and review the assignments above.** Follow the steps for the first couple weeks. These activities will lay the groundwork for your success.

If you started this process – congratulations!

You should now be at a point where you have a "clear vision" of what success means to you. You should have a distinct set of goals that are based on your business plan.

Now, let's look at what's in store for the next four weeks. You'll primarily be looking for opportunities to leverage your existing client relationships. You'll quickly uncover new business and referrals.

Your clients want you to achieve outrageous success!

Your current clients are the foundation for your future business growth. The activities you will undertake in this section have a way of bringing surprising and meaningful results. One of my coaching clients recently told me **his fees jumped by 50 percent in less than two months after he began our client profiling activity.**

Even if you have a new, relatively small client-base, you need to leverage your existing relationships. Your clients will be a source of new sales, increased assets and advocacy-based referrals.

Of course, this is a two way street. To put yourself in a position to receive these added client benefits, you will have to deliver an exceptional level of service. We call this **Delivering the Ultimate Client Experience.**

Over the next four weeks you need to:

- Clearly define your ideal client relationship
- Segment your clientele
- Update your client profiles, and
- Incorporate an advocacy based referral process.

Step 4 – Define Your Ideal Client Relationship.

Top advisors don't allow themselves to become prisoners of unhappy or unsuitable clients. They carefully select their clients by first defining an ideal relationship. This definition is based on an analysis of their existing clients. Take time during this step to update your definition of an ideal client relationship.

Begin by identifying your current ideal relationships and then use this information to refine your definition of an ideal client. After you've finished, you're in a better position to offer your top relationships a higher level of attention and convert them into advocates of your practice. In turn, you are better able to structure your prospecting and referral activities to take advantage of this unique aspect of your business.

Is it time to update your definition of an Ideal Client?

"If you want to achieve success, all you need to do is find a way to model those who have already succeeded. Take a proven system and duplicate it."
- Tony Robbins

A few years ago, during a coaching call, one of my newer clients asked me if it was possible for his definition of an ideal client to change from year to year. As it turns out, he had inherited a fair number of accounts from a retiring advisor. At first, the relationships did not appear to be significant, but as he met with each client, he was finding many opportunities for new business. Yet he was worried that this new group of clients had a profile which was decidedly different from his existing clientele.

Not wanting to look a gift horse in the mouth, this advisor felt it might be better to change his definition of an ideal client or at the very least have 2 distinct versions. Although I was open to the possibility of either of these courses of action, I first suggested he review an ideal client profiling exercise. He agreed and called me back the next day with a surprising answer.

No, his definition of an ideal client did not need to change. Even when he added his inherited clients to the mix, he found consistency with the type of people with whom he enjoyed doing business. He also commented that the exercise only took an hour, so he was going to redo it every six months to be sure he stayed on track. More specifically, this producer uncovered 3 important aspects of his practice:

First, this advisor learned that his high net-worth clients were providing the lion's share of his income. Though this discovery may seem intuitive, this producer hadn't quantified the magnitude of his high net worth clients' contribution to his overall commissions and fees. He learned that the more financial wherewithal he has to work with, the better job he is able to do for his clients and the more money he will make. Armed with this new revelation, one of his goals is to focus more on relationships with his current high net worth clients.

Additionally, he is going to do a better job of qualifying new relationships for net worth. Have you set a net worth minimum for our clients? If you have, when is the last time you measured the average net worth of your existing clientele? Is it time to raise the bar?

Second, this coaching client re-discovered the value of thorough client profiling. The accounts he inherited did not look all that valuable on the surface, but spending time updating their records allowed him to find many hidden gems. The retired advisor had become complacent and allowed business opportunities to slip through the cracks. With minimal effort, "C" clients quickly became valuable "A" clients. Are you regularly updating the profiles of your ideal clients? Are there neglected clients on your books who may now qualify for a higher level of service?

Finally, this producer found he had a fair number of clients who gave him referrals, but he had no program in place for encouraging continued advocacy. Now, as part of his business planning process, he is going to create an advocacy initiative among his ideal clients. He realizes that by helping his clients understand the mutual benefits of advocacy, he will be able to offer better service and uncover qualified referrals. Do you regularly let your ideal clients know how important they are to you business? Do they know you are accepting new client relationships? Are your referrals sporadic or consistent? Are they qualified to be new ideal clients of your practice?

As my client observed, this activity doesn't take a great deal of time. It should certainly be done at least once per year. As you continue to get ready for outrageous success, you should include this exercise in your planning process.

With this success story as a backdrop, to complete step four, be sure to update your definition of an ideal client. If you need help, Appendix B contains my "Ideal Client Profiling Exercise". The goal of this worksheet is to help you identify your ideal client relationships and refine your definition of an ideal client.

You should be able to complete step four in a less than an hour. Once you're done, you're ready to move onto step five.

Step 5 – Conduct a Client Profiling Campaign.

Okay, with your ideal relationship in mind, it's now time to reach out to your clients through a profiling exercise. This step will take the most time during this four week period.

(In fact, if you're successful, this campaign could produce enough activity to last for several months. Since you'll be spending more time with your clients, this will be time well spent.)

A simple client profile - asking the right questions in a "different" way can help you find new opportunities that deepen relationships. Ultimately, you gain a better understanding of your client's total financial picture and personal goals, which in turn, leads to more business!

You may try to convince yourself that you already know everything you need to know about your clients. But unless you've done a complete update within the last 90 days – you probably don't. "Stuff" changes all the time and even our best clients have new wants and needs. This step also gives you a great excuse to segment (or to re-segment) your clientele.

This Step Usually has the Quickest Payoff

Back in 2006, I was coaching a financial advisor with a major firm in Florida. In getting his action plan together, we decided that profiling all of his clients was extremely important. He made profiling his top priority because:

- He felt he had lost touch with many of his current clients
- His clients were not segmented, and
- Even his top clients didn't know everything he could do for them.

After just a couple months, he was on track for his best quarter ever, and his business was up 50% over the same period the prior year.

This was an outrageous success.

And it was all because he spent time updating his client profiles. You could achieve similar results if you take advantage of the ideas we're reviewing in this step.

Here are the basic steps for a successful profiling campaign:

- 1. Create a mail merge list of your entire client database.** If you have contact management software, this step will be easy. If not, load your clients' contact information into a program like Excel.

2. **Break your list down into manageable pieces** for mailing and follow-up purposes – maybe 25 to 100 clients per week. You'll be calling and meeting with a large number of your clients, so you don't want to overload your calendar.
3. **Send each client a personalized letter and a questionnaire** (see Appendix C) explaining the importance of keeping their profiles up-to-date. Whenever possible, include your current brochure or resume. You should also enclose a return envelope.
4. **Within five days of receiving returned questionnaires, call each client to set an appointment to review their responses.** Your assistant could also make these appointment scheduling calls on your behalf. It is extremely important not to let this follow-up opportunity turn cold. Although most of these meetings will be in-person, for some clients you may choose to schedule telephone appointments.
5. **In reviewing the profiling questionnaire with each client,** be sure to focus on identifying new assets you may be able to manage, any new financial goals and how you may be able to encourage referrals to members of their affinity groups. The key to a successful interview is to be a good listener. Use your questionnaire to have an interactive discussion. Don't fall into the trap of just filling in the blanks.
6. **Follow this meeting with a personalized thank you note that includes agreed upon action steps.** Your questionnaire should contain space to record and prioritize each of these steps (see the sample questionnaire in Appendix C). If you uncover specific investment or service needs, be sure you or a member of your staff follow-up immediately.
7. **At this point, you should take the opportunity to segment each client into their appropriate grouping.** Record each segment in your contact management system. Always remember to keep your definition of an ideal client in mind.
8. **Resend the same letter after 60 days to all non-responders.** Each time you send the letter, 40 to 60 percent of the recipients will return the questionnaire. Your overall goal should be to get a response from 80 to 90 percent of your clients.
9. **Repeat this process at least annually.** Many successful advisors run this type of campaign twice each year.

Appendix C, titled "Client Profiling Tools", contains samples of all the materials you'll need to conduct a complete client profiling campaign. (You'll find several alternative profiling letters and questionnaires in the "[Your Clients](#)" section of [EncoreAdvisor.com](#).)

Step five, profiling your clients, is at the heart of delivering the ultimate client experience. It helps set the stage for all of your client interactions. Follow these nine steps closely and you will be well on your way to creating outrageous success with your clients.

An Alternate Profile with a “Top Client” Focus

If you already have a well-defined group of “A” clients, you may want to slightly alter your profiling process. This variation will give you a chance to individually acknowledge your top clients importance to your practice. After all, most people like to know how much they’re appreciated.

In this case, include language in your letter (see the alternate letter in Appendix C”) that indicates you’ll be proactively calling these clients to schedule a meeting. Although you’ll still be sending the profiling questionnaire, your clients won’t need to return it before you call. You’re simply giving them a head start on the subject matter for your meeting.

Mail these letters at a rate in which you’ll be able to reasonably follow-up – 25 to 50 per week. You don’t want to promise your top clients a call and then not have time to make the calls or hold the appointments.

In this instance, you should still send your standard profiling letter to your other client segments. Only your top clients receive this more personalized attention.

Conducting a Client Survey

Client surveys are an essential element of any successful financial services practice. If you've recently conducted a client profiling campaign, you could substitute a simple client survey (see Appendix C). Here is a five step approach:

- 1. Decide whose feedback you would like to solicit at this time and put your list together:** Generally speaking, the more feedback you receive the better off you and your team will be. At the same time, every survey that comes back with a suggestion or question will need follow-up. Given all of your other current time commitments, you will need to decide if you should survey your entire client base or just a select group of ideal clients. If you go with a select group, consider scheduling the remainder of your clientele in future months.
- 2. Determine the structure of your survey, create a rough draft and secure any required approvals:** Here your choice is to only solicit survey style feedback or include your survey in a client profile update. If you have recently completed thorough client profiles, stick with a simple report card. If you are getting ready to sit down with your clients to conduct regular reviews, make the report card a part of your process. (See the alternative letters in Appendix C.)
- 3. Begin putting the surveys in the hands of your clients:** In this step your options are a written correspondence (mail or email), an in-person meeting or a combination of both. The simple report card is best done by mail, whereas a client profile may be done all 3 ways.
- 4. Follow-up on all questions and concerns:** This should go without saying, but all too often we find advisors get so busy with their daily routines they forget to properly respond to this important client feedback. We suggest setting aside time each day to review your returned surveys or profiles with your assistant (or team) to determine priority and assign follow-up responsibilities with a deadline.
- 5. Send a thank you to all responders:** This simple gesture will help further ingrain in your clients the importance of their feedback. These replies should be personally written thank you notes. Whenever possible, make mention of follow-up you will be doing to answer questions or alleviate concerns identified on the report card. If you choose to use a form letter, at least be sure it is personalized and signed by hand.

Step 6 – Include an Advocacy Discussion in each of Your Client Profiling Meetings.

Client advocacy is our preferred referral strategy; it has consistently produced the best results.

Think of it this way, your clients are your best source of referrals. But to be effective you need to regularly let them know you're open for new business. You need to turn them into advocates for your practice. Your profiling meetings will give you an excellent opportunity.

Three Steps to Client Advocacy

- 1.** Before your profiling meetings, spend 20 to 30 minutes researching people your client may know and you believe would make a good referral - friends, family, neighbors, work associates...
- 2.** List these names on the agenda for your meeting under a separate heading - "Advocacy" (see sample in Appendix D).
- 3.** During your meeting explain the mutual benefits of advocacy to your client, review the names you have uncovered and ask your client if they would be willing to make an introduction.

It can be this simple!

Simply mention to each client the specific name of at least one person you believe they know personally or professionally. Ask if that person would fit in well with the way you run your practice. Keep in mind that the greatest reason your clients don't give you referrals is that they're not properly asked.

And remember, clients enjoy being asked for their opinion.

Obviously, before you meet with your clients, you'll need to conduct some basic research. Use phone books and the internet to scour the neighborhoods, places of employment, civic organizations or social clubs with which your clients may be associated.

The extra step of doing this advanced homework pays big dividends because it increases the likelihood of a referral. It removes the blank stares that often-times accompany an open-ended referral request.

Client Advocacy at Work

One of the greatest challenges of conducting training sessions is making sure nodding heads and "that will work" comments turn into actions. Proven, time-tested ideas never make a difference unless they are put into practice. All too often advisors receive great ideas and put them off for another day that never comes.

Last year, I received a call from a successful advisor who attended one of my training sessions on client advocacy and referrals. He was excited because he had an "aha" moment when he inadvertently put one of the key concepts from the workshop to work. The call went something like this:

"Rob, do you remember that stuff you taught us about advocacy?"

"Sure," I said, "we covered a lot of ground. Is there something in particular you need help with?"

"No," he quickly responded, "I just wanted to let you know I accidentally tried one of your ideas and wow, it actually worked!"

"Well, I guess that's a good thing," I responded. "Please tell me what happened."

My caller then relayed this story, "I was preparing for a financial plan review meeting with one of my best clients and while going through his file I came across an article my assistant had clipped from our hometown newspaper. My client had been selected as a board member of a prominent local company. Alongside his name were 3 other new board members I knew would make great clients. That's when I remembered your referral strategy, so I listed the other board members under the topic "advocacy" on the client meeting agenda. To make a long story short, during the appointment my client offered to make a personal introduction to 2 of his fellow board members. He said he didn't know the third one well enough. Two days later he called me to tell me how impressed he was with my work and the professionalism of my advocacy process. He proceeded to give me 3 additional referrals. I was blown away."

"Excellent," I said, "thanks for sharing your success. But why did you say this was accidental?"

He continued somewhat sheepishly, "I had all the best intentions of following up on the ideas you taught in the referral workshop, but in all honesty, if it hadn't been for my assistant placing the newspaper article in my client's file, it never would have happened."

"Thanks again," I replied, "don't forget to build on this success."

The call ended with the advisor telling me he had already started using the advocacy workshop material to research other potential referrals to use in upcoming client review meetings. Needless to say, he was very excited.

Keep up the momentum!

This may seem like a great deal to get done in just four weeks, but it won't be if you get your team involved. Remember, you just need to allocate a couple hours each week to this 90 day process.

Over the years, I've found that the profiling activity alone produces significant results. I've seen amazingly quick results. Oftentimes, your current clients are your best source for new business.

Outrageous success is right around the corner...

Your Clients May Not be Your Only Advocates

An advocate is a person or group of people who have an almost inexplicable desire to see you and your practice succeed; they are promoters, campaigners, and supporters of your business. In addition to clients, advocates can be personal acquaintances, family members, prospects and other professionals.

Think about your practice, do you know people who go out of their way to give you referrals or introduce you to new people?

These are your advocates.

High Quality Referrals

One of the biggest benefits to regularly promoting advocacy in your practice is the increase in referrals. In addition to increased referrals, advisors who use advocacy techniques tend to receive references that are more qualified and ready to do business. It is truly a technique for finding new clients who look like your ideal clients.

Part Three: Your 90 Day Action Plan

Weeks Seven and Eight

"The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate."

Joseph Priestley

Key learning points:

Step 7 – Use your story to create a résumé style brochure. Whether it's a short story (your "elevator pitch") or a longer story (a brochure or a bio piece), you need to be able to quickly and clearly explain why your clients do business with you. The language you use in telling your story is extremely important; it helps you sell you!

Step 8 – Start putting your story to work. Your story won't help if your clients and prospects don't read it. When your clients have a copy of your story, they're more likely to send you qualified referrals. Your prospects will be able to understand the full scope of your services. They'll realize your practice is more than just the current service you're offering.

Weeks 7 and 8 – Update Your Story and Put it to Work

At this point, your profiling activities should be well underway. You should be receiving questionnaires in the return mail, scheduling appointments and discussing client advocacy. All of this activity should give your practice a boost.

Now it's time to focus on your marketing material. I call this "Creating a Story that Sells." Your story is the way you articulate your unique value proposition. You should use your story in both your client and prospect communications.

Your story is a vital tool for your long-term success. Over time, here are several places you'll put your story to work:

- Brochures and biographical material
- Presentation books
- Elevator statement
- Website
- Marketing campaigns

During this two week period of your 90 day outrageous success roadmap, I want you to update (or create) your story and begin putting it to work as you network with potential clients.

Step 7 – Use Your Story to Create a Résumé Style Brochure.

Your marketing materials matter!

Although it's sometimes tough to breakaway from your daily routines to focus on your marketing tools; you need to deliver your message with confidence, integrity and clarity. Good marketing materials strengthen your client relationships, improve your prospecting results and increase your referrability.

Whether it's a short story (your **"elevator pitch"**) or a longer story (a brochure or a bio piece), you need to be able to quickly and clearly explain why your clients do business with you. The language you use in telling your story is extremely important.

Some of this Stuff Really Stinks

My mailbox at home is regularly filled with marketing material from financial advisors. Most of it stinks!

Here are just a few examples:

The over-hyped dinner seminar: A financial planner sends me repeated invitations to an "exclusive" dinner at a nice French restaurant. He claims this workshop is "only offered to certain individuals", but based on his topic (and the fact that I am a financial advisor) this is an empty statement. The lengthy invitation is filled with bullet points and bolded text straight out of a beginning course in Microsoft Word. Last, but not least, if he covers as much as promised during the "information-intensive" dinner, he'll need to serve a 27 course meal!

The cheesy brochure: A financial advisor mails me a lengthy brochure describing himself and his firm. The grammar is terrible and the layout is amateurish. Plus, it had to cost a fortune to print. His cover letter suggests that I requested the information and promises a follow-up phone call. This adds up to one outright lie and a broken promise. This advisor is flushing his money and his credibility down the toilet.

The ugly website: An investment advisor sends me a post card that directs me to his website to learn more about his "unique money management philosophy." The postcard actually looks pretty good. But when I get to the website it looks like a garbled mess. When I do manage to find the page describing his "unique" style, it's the same drivel you might see from anyone purporting to be an asset allocation specialist. The text was probably just cut and paste from the software vendor for his mutual platform.

Yes, I know these are harsh assessments, but this is the reality of much of the financial advisor marketing I see today. In the rush of day-to-day business, many advisors don't take the time develop sound marketing strategies. And they compound this problem with lousy marketing material.

Your words should help you sell you!

Avoiding industry jargon and buzzwords is essential. Never use words that are simply meant to make you look important. Use language your clients will easily understand and be able to relate to their personal goals and aspirations.

To get started on step seven, here are the eleven questions you need to answer to create a compelling story:

- 1. How is your **practiced organized**?** Are you a sole practitioner, on a team or in a partnership? Who are the key members of your team? Don't assume that people will automatically understand the structure of your practice.
- 2. What is your **business style**?** Are you a financial planner, a registered investment advisor, a wealth manager, an estate planner or a retirement planning specialist? Your description needs to be consistent. You cannot change your style to fit differing situations.
- 3. What is your **predominant client management process**?** What's your specialty? What methodology or strategy do you apply to each relationship to help your clients achieve their personal goals? Your process helps you establish your professionalism.
- 4. How would you describe; and what is your **corporate or broker/dealer affiliation**?** How does it help you manage your client relationships? Is it important for your clients to understand this alliance? Can you leverage any corporate branding opportunities? Depending on the nature of your corporate structure, inclusion of your affiliation may be optional.
- 5. What **value-added services** do you offer to compliment or support your primary client management process?** This should not be a laundry list of everything you "could" do. You may not offer these value-added services to all of your clients, but they should be important to a large number of your key relationships.
- 6. What are the **primary products or services** you use to satisfy your clients' investment, insurance or other financial planning needs?** Again, this shouldn't be a laundry list of everything you can count your hands on. You don't want your clients to confuse your practice with your products. But sometimes a brief product listing will help your clients gain a deeper understanding of the full scope of your services.
- 7. What are the **unique attributes** of your practice?** What is your unique client proposition? What makes you different? Why do your current clients do business with you? If you're not sure, call some of your top clients and ask for their help. No two financial advisors are the same, but sometimes it's easy to take your uniqueness for granted.
- 8. What is your **definition of an ideal client**?** Which of your current relationships do you enjoy the most? How would your **ideal clients describe you**? What do they say about you to their friends? Although these questions may be very similar, they can produce very different answers. Including language that

addresses both perspectives is an important part of developing your marketing material.

- 9.** Do you have a **mission, vision or philosophy statement** describing your practice? Does this statement help your clients and prospects better understand your story? If it does, include it in your marketing material. If not, you can skip this question. A catchy tagline is not a good substitute for words that articulate your value.
- 10.** What **professional or educational experiences** do you want to emphasize? How do they make you better at what you do? Please, no boring lists of degrees and certifications. Highlight and describe those experiences that accentuate your skills.
- 11.** What **personal experiences, hobbies or interests** will help your clients understand the non-business side of you and your practice? Which of your interests help demonstrate your passions and commitments? Oftentimes, personal differentiation stands out in the minds of your clients. You become more memorable.

Use these questions to evaluate your current marketing materials. Are you doing a good job of telling your story? As you conduct this review, be brutally honest. Does your story need an update or a complete overhaul?

Hopefully, you'll only need an update. Use these questions to strengthen your marketing pieces during this stage of your 90 day campaign; it shouldn't take too long.

If you need to start from scratch, use this time to create a résumé style brochure. You'll use your résumé in the remaining weeks of this program; it will also be valuable in the long-term success of your practice. Complete instructions as well as samples for building your brochure can be found in Appendix E.

Is Poor Marketing Better Than No Marketing at All?

In my view, most marketing mistakes are the result of several widespread misconceptions:

Creating quality marketing material takes too much time. Well, unless your business is busting at the seams with clients and you're backlogged with prospects, you have to make time to develop marketing tools. When done correctly, you can confine your overall marketing time to less than a handful of hours per week.

First-class marketing material is too expensive. When it comes to brochures, websites, prospecting letters or any of the other tools you need to market your practice, it's important to think quality. And quality doesn't mean 10-page brochures filled with high color photos on the most expensive paper stock. Quality comes from the way you consistently describe the value you bring to your client relationships. A big budget is not a requirement.

Off-the-shelf marketing material is just as good as anything else. This can only be true if you believe the service you offer your clients is no better than your competition. Why else would you use a template for your monthly newsletter, website or brochure? Time and again I see copycat marketing that makes everyone look the same. Do you really think clients and prospects fall for these poorly veiled attempts at personalization?

Targeted marketing material doesn't help. That's just like saying your small clients are just as important to your practice as your million-dollar clients. Or the clients who constantly complain deserve the same attention as those you really enjoy. Your marketing approach needs to focus on prospects who are similar to your ideal clients; it's a great way to be sure you'll uncover even more ideal clients.

Avoid these misconceptions.

Remember, you need to deliver your story with confidence, integrity and clarity. Well-written marketing materials strengthen your client relationships, improve your prospecting results and increase your referrability.

Step 8 – Start Putting Your Story to Work.

Your story won't help if your clients and prospects don't read it. When your clients have a copy of your story, they're more likely to send you qualified referrals. Your prospects will be able to understand the full scope of your services. They'll realize your practice is more than just the current service you're offering.

These points may seem obvious, but the majority of advisors we encounter don't have decent marketing material. Their stuff is outdated, unprofessional or non-existent. They try to get by with business cards and a friendly smile.

In step eight, we want you to immediately begin capitalizing on the new marketing material you've updated or created. Here's a quick activity to create a new success habit that will also allow you to put your new story to work (see Appendix E for four additional campaigns):

1. You probably have a desk drawer filled with the business cards of people you've met professionally or socially. Your goal in collecting these cards may have been to send these folks information about your practice. If you're like most advisors, this never happened. **Put all of these cards in a stack.**
2. At the same time, spend a few minutes brainstorming about folks you've met but haven't collected their business cards. Maybe you met them at a civic club meeting, through your child's school or at church. **Jot their names down on a yellow pad.** Look up their addresses or ask your assistant for help.
3. Over the course of this two week period, make it a point to collect even more business cards. **Add them to your stack.**
4. At this point, you probably have 25 to 50 folks to whom you can tell your story. **Divide this number by the number of days you have left in this two week period** and set a daily goal for sending them a handwritten note along with your new résumé style brochure. (If your list is more than 50 names, you may need to extend this activity beyond week eight.)
5. Each day, **set aside a small block of time** in which you'll write these handwritten notes. They only need to be a few sentences long. Your note should include:
 - a. How you met the person you're writing
 - b. A brief reference to the fact that you're always on the lookout for new relationships
 - c. An acknowledgment of the enclosed brochure
 - d. Permission to call you if they want to talk
6. After you've gone through your initial stack of contacts. Be sure to **keep this success habit active** by sending similar notes each time you have an opportunity to introduce yourself to a prospective client. You'll set yourself apart from the crowd.

A Simple Note

Dear (Personalize),

We recently met at (list your meeting place). You expressed an interest in learning more about my business.

I believe we might work well together.

With this in mind, I've enclosed a copy of my brochure. It describes how I help my clients accomplish their goals. It also details more about myself and my investment practice. Please let us know if you need additional copies.

I look forward to talking again with you soon.

Take care,

EncoreAdvisor.com

7. Optional: To dramatically **improve the results** of this activity, set aside time to follow up each note with a personal call. This call could be made three to five business days after you've put your story in the mail. If you just have a handful of daily notes, these calls won't take long.

New clients and steady referrals...

We're not suggesting that everyone who receives your note will immediately call to do business. You're simply expanding your circle of influence by planting seeds with your contacts. Plus, you now have a list of folks to add to your regular marketing activities. As time goes by, many of your contacts will turn into clients or introduce you to people who will fit your practice.

You're creating opportunities for achieving outrageous success!

Additional Letters

You will find four additional letters in Appendix E which will allow you to put your story to work with other groups:

1. Your clients
2. Your connections
3. Your social prospects
4. You active prospects

Part Three: Your 90 Day Action Plan

Weeks Nine and Ten

"Order and simplification are the first steps toward the mastery of a subject."

Thomas Mann

Key learning points:

Step 9 – Uncover the Gems in your Prospect Database. If your prospect database is beyond your control, you may have your lists of prospects in various places – legal pads, note cards or contact management software. This probably means you don't really know which of your prospects are qualified to be your clients or when you should contact them next. There is a silver lining; your existing database is most likely littered with prospect gems.

Step 10 – Create a communication calendar to start treating your top prospects like top clients. The best way to demonstrate your unique value proposition is to treat your top prospects like they're already clients. The gems in your database along with your advocacy-based referrals need to see you in action.

Weeks 9 and 10 - Refresh Your Prospecting Strategies

Let's do a quick review of the activities you've accomplished so far in your 90 day quest to create outrageous success:

- You have a **mental picture** of where you're headed
- You've established specific goals that are based on **success habits**
- You clearly understand how to define your **ideal client relationship**
- You've launched a **profiling campaign** which is uncovering new business opportunities and referrals
- You have **your story in place** in the form of a new or updated marketing material
- You've **put your story to work** with some of your contacts

Wow!

That's terrific progress – congratulations! There are only four more weeks to go. Now, it's time to focus on prospecting and marketing.

Are you wasting time and money?

Financial advisors tend to waste a lot of time, effort and money when it comes to prospecting. In a never ending saga to find new leads, there is a tendency to constantly try new campaigns and ignore prospects that may already exist. This can be a huge mistake.

For now, keep these two important thoughts in mind:

- There is no need to reinvent the wheel.
- There is no need to keep marketing campaigns going when they aren't producing results.

Over this two week stretch, we want to help you focus on refreshing your prospecting and marketing strategies. When you combine this activity with the referrals you'll be generating through the client advocacy process (see step six), you should find that you have all the prospects you need. By better organizing your prospects and treating them like they're already your clients, you'll end up with more meaningful relationships. In fact, your new clients will begin to resemble your ideal clients.

Step 9 – Uncover the Gems in Your Prospect Database.

If your prospect database is beyond your control, you may have your lists of prospects in various places – legal pads, note cards or contact management software. This probably means you don't really know which of your prospects are qualified to be your clients or when you should contact them next. There is a silver lining; your existing database is most likely littered with prospect gems.

For purposes of this book, we'll assume you own a Contact Management System (CMS) and that your prospects' contact information is already loaded into the software. If not, you may want to review my Contact Management Basics covered in Appendix F.

At this point, you need to create an ongoing maintenance strategy for your CMS. In other words, you need to attach action steps to your contact system and database, truly bringing the two together. Here are the critical steps:

- 1. Decide on the financial qualifications** - Before you can begin to get your prospects under control, you need to decide on the financial qualifications for someone to remain in your database.

They could include:

- Total net worth
- Liquid net worth
- Annual income
- Investment minimum
- A combination of any of these numbers

In any literature you send or any phone conversation you may have, you need to be willing to stick with these numbers. It will become a regular point of reference which means some prospects will eliminate themselves while others will see it as one of the important metrics of the way you run your business.

- 2. Determine interest groupings** - After you establish financial minimums, you need to begin segmenting your prospects based on the services you offer in your practice. From your prospects' perspectives these groupings will look like personal interests.

For example, if your practice focuses on investments, your specialties may be running equity portfolios, laddering bonds and managing IRA Rollover accounts. Your prospects interest categories should be grouped into professionally managed stock portfolios, income strategies and planning for retirement. All future contact should focus on helping you put your financially qualified prospects into one or more of these groups.

- 3. Send your prospects a letter** - (Appendix G contains a telephone version of this campaign including a script.) Now that you've defined financial qualifications and determined interest groupings, you need to explain your dilemma to your

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prospects. You need to let them know that being part of your practice is a privilege.

As they continue to learn about you, you need to get to know more about them. You will not be pushy; in fact, you are at the point where you need to carefully select your new clients.

Send your prospects the simple letter on the next page. (For an optional calling script, see Appendix G.) Your goal is to communicate your financial minimum, explain your specialties, determine interest(s) and gain permission for future contact. Let your prospects know it is okay to opt-out of future communication. As a byproduct, you'll eliminate those who may only serve to waste your time in the future.

Your letter should contain a reply card or "tear off" and you'll need to include a return envelope. Initially mail this letter to your entire prospect database and after 60 days repeat the process to those who don't respond. Continue mailing to non-responders every 60 days until you are satisfied with your results.

This is also another opportunity to put your story to work. Include a copy of the new marketing material you created in Step 7 with each letter. (Appendix G contains a telephone version of this campaign including a script.)

In Step 10, by helping you create an ongoing communication schedule, I'll show you what to do with the results of this campaign.

A Letter for Your Active Prospects

Dear (Active Prospect,)

Would You Like to Continue to Receive Valuable (Your Specialty) Information?

Our practice is growing rapidly and we are finding it difficult to stay in touch with everyone who has requested information over the past few years about our practice and our approach to (your specialty.) With this in mind, we are writing to both give you an update on our business and to determine if you would like to continue to receive regular communication.

Please find enclosed a copy of our brochure (if you have one). We work with high net worth clients, minimum of (\$---,---,_) in (your financial metric,) who need help in the areas of (specialty one, specialty two and specialty three) and value the advice of a financial professional. Our clients rely on us for (interest one, interest two and/or interest three.) In fact, we select our new clients based on their interests in these key areas.

To help you get to know us better, we are introducing a new service for prospective clients of our practice that. First, on the form below, you tell us your areas of interest. Next, we will send you regular monthly updates based on your request. Finally, we hope over time you will find the information we send to be valuable and would like you to come to us if you feel you will benefit from our services.

It is that simple, we do not believe in being pushy. Many of our best clients have come to us after having had time to get to know us through similar information.

Attached to the bottom of this letter is a tear off form, simply select your area(s) of interest, update your preferred method of communication (mail or email) and return it in the enclosed postage paid envelope. We will take it from there.

All the best,

Excellent Advisor

P.S. We know you will benefit from our new free information service. Complete the form below and return it in the enclosed envelope.

Tear Off and Return in the Enclosed Envelope

Dear (*Your Name*),

Yes, I would like to participate in your new information service. Please send me regular updates on (check all that apply):

_____ Interest one

_____ Interest two

_____ Interest three

I prefer to receive these updates via:

_____ Mail (please update address below)

_____ Email - Please list your preferred email address: _____.

No thank you, please remove me from your list _____.

Thank you (*mail merge*),

Active Prospect Name

Address

Telephone

Step 10 – Create a Communication Calendar to Start Treating Your Top Prospects Like Top Clients.

Now that you're beginning to uncover the gems in your prospect database, you need to have a system for quickly turning them into clients. The fastest way to turn prospects into clients is to make them feel like they're already clients.

Treat your prospects better than their current advisors do.

You want to be like a pair of expensive loafers or pre-washed jeans. The better they feel, no matter the cost, you're more likely to buy them.

When your ongoing communications help your prospects more fully understand your unique value proposition, they'll feel more comfortable. This will almost certainly mean:

- They will become clients more quickly
- You will establish bigger relationships with fewer hidden assets
- More stability and loyalty from the onset
- Increased referrals and references

How do you go about the process of treating your top prospects like they're already clients?

First, the quality, not the quantity, of your list will be directly proportional the success of your client acquisition strategies. By implementing last week's activity, you are cleaning out all the junk in your prospect database. You will have consolidated the leads you have in your note cards, legal pads, spreadsheets and contact management programs.

If you're confident a prospect has the potential to be a good fit for your business keep their name. If not, throw them away. After all, it's easier to find new, qualified prospect than it is to turn lousy prospects into good ones.

Last week's campaign has helped you develop your list of top prospects.

Second, put together a calendar of ongoing communications. How often will you meet, call, write and hold special events for your top prospects? Don't try to reinvent the wheel. Just modify the calendar you already have in place for your best clients. (See Appendix H for a sample.)

For example:

- If you send your elite clients a couple handwritten letters per year, send one to your best prospects after each important meeting.
- You may have some general communication you mail to your clients on a monthly basis, consider if your prospects should be included in the same mailing.
- You might be able to invite your best prospects to the same special event you hold for your clients.
- Your year end client tax planning letter could be modified for your top prospects.

The One that Got Away

A few years ago, during a coaching call, one of my financial advisor clients relayed a major prospecting disappointment. He had been working on a 7 figure IRA Rollover with a "humungous prospect" for a number of years. When the time finally came to arrange an appointment to sign the necessary paperwork, he learned that his prospect had already set the rollover wheels in motion with her current advisor.

This happened despite the fact that this prospect had regularly complained about her current advisor's lack of service.

Unfortunately, these near misses take place all too often. You believe you are on track with a future client, but are suddenly derailed by an unexpected event. Whether you are blindsided by a significant event that hits the news or the sales efforts of a competitor, you are only left to wonder what you could have done differently.

Weeks, and in some cases, years of effort can go for naught.

This advisor did a good job of identifying a future ideal client and knowing when the prospect would be in a position to take action. But my further conversation with this advisor uncovered the fact that his contact with this prospect was limited to 2 "touching base" telephone calls per year. Over a 3 to 4 year period of time, he made no attempt to get to know his "humungous prospect" more personally.

The prospect was given little opportunity to get to know how this new advisor would be different from her current advisor. In the end, she took the easy way out. The advisor's patience and persistence was thwarted by poor positioning.

Although there are no silver bullet solutions, the best long-term strategy for avoiding unexpected prospecting surprises is treating your top prospects as if they are already clients.

This process helps you eliminate the common misperception that all advisors are the same. As you show your future clients how they will be treated once they become actual clients of your practice, they realize you are a professional and not just a product pusher. When your prospects can see how your current recommendation will evolve into multi-dimensional solutions, they recognize the advantages of developing a lasting relationship.

Finally, stick with it. The discipline you develop in treating your top prospects like clients will help you land bigger and more stable relationships. Don't fall victim to a lack of advanced planning. Don't allow a lack of immediate success distract you from this critical aspect of growing a world class business.

Even though you're beginning this strategy as part of this 90 day program, don't stop here. Allow this activity to become part of your ongoing practice management routines.

Keep this Ball Rolling

The biggest challenges you face in working with active prospects are being sure they are a good fit for your practice and managing effective ongoing communication. When this is done properly, you are able to minimize time spent with unqualified prospects and more quickly convert your best prospects into clients. To successfully manage this process, you must routinely ask yourself 4 questions:

1. **Do your suspects qualify to be active prospects?** In most situations, there is no substitute for direct qualifying questions and delivering a clear explanation of what you are looking for in a client relationship. This is best done when you or a member of your team performs a quick profile before adding the suspect to your active prospect database. Many financial professionals avoid this step and end up wasting time on unqualified prospects.

At the very least be sure you understand the basic financial wherewithal of your suspect and consider their general personality. If they don't meet your financial minimums and/or you don't feel you will work well together, you shouldn't invest further time. Time is in limited supply and is better spent on the people who better fit your ideal client profile.

2. **For active prospects, how long is too long?** Most financial advisors have allowed suspects to creep into the role of active prospects or they have trouble eliminating contacts who are proving to be unsuccessful. Therefore, periodically reviewing your database becomes essential.

An old rule of thumb says it takes 6 touches to turn a qualified prospect into a client, therefore when you assess your database create a list of prospects who have been contacted more than 6 times and simply ask yourself questions similar to those in the first question. If they haven't been qualified financially, it is time to do so. If they are putting you off and you don't feel there is a personality fit, purge them. This will allow you to narrow your focus and dedicate time where it will have greater rewards.

3. **Do your active prospect touches communicate the value of your work?** Though your database will never be perfect, when you selectively choose who gets in and have a system for regularly eliminating time-wasters, your touches can focus on converting true prospects into meaningful long-term relationships. You go from being at the mercy of your prospects to being in control of who you would like to become part of your practice.

Remember, there are many more qualified prospects than you could possibly handle as actual clients. The supply-demand equation is definitely slanted in your direction. You need to move from haphazard to precise communication. Your message to each of your active prospects should drive home the idea that you have chosen them based on their qualifications. Plus, they should share your belief that the way you run your business will bring them closer to realizing their dreams.

4. **Do you treat your active prospects like your clients?** Once an active prospect is in your database and understands your value and intentions, you need to have a system for helping them feel like a client. This is somewhat assumptive on your part, but serves the dual purpose of helping you be ready to establish a relationship when the occasion is right and letting the prospect know what to expect once they become a client.

After all, no matter how well-qualified, most active prospects are not on your timeline, but ongoing client-style contact will bridge this gap. It is no longer a question of if they will become a client; it is only a matter of when.

Though these 4 questions are simple, they are often ignored. Take time to relate them to your business. Streamlining your interaction with your active prospects will mean more quality time with genuine prospects that are best-suited to the way you enjoy doing business.

You may have all the prospects you need

When you combine the step nine prospecting activity with the advocacy-based referrals you'll be generating through step six, you'll probably find that you have all the prospects you need. Now, through step ten, you understand how to treat them like they're already clients of your practice (also, see Appendix H).

You're moving away from quantity and moving towards quality. Your prospect database should be filled with folks who look like your ideal clients.

You're another step closer to outrageous success.

Part Three: Your 90 Day Action Plan

Weeks Eleven and Twelve

"If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else."

Yogi Berra

Key learning points:

Step 11 – Study the success habits of world class advisors. Top advisors implement proven success habits. They know which activities have the greatest impact on their practices. As you begin to gain better control of your time, spend some time studying their priorities.

Step 12– Planning your ideal day. With these success habits in mind, think about your typical day, and decide which activities are truly productive. Most likely, meeting and talking with clients and prospects will top your list. On the flipside, consider unproductive activities that you could minimize or eliminate.

Weeks 11 and 12 – Gain Control over Your Time and Reduce Stress

We're in the homestretch!

It's time to examine the final steps of your 90 day roadmap for creating outrageous success.

By following these last steps, you'll cover several important time, activity and priority management principles. You'll end up with greater personal and professional freedom. Your goals should be to more efficiently create new business opportunities, get more done in less time and reduce stress.

Advisors we coach are sometimes blown away by the impact of our basic time management strategies. Each of these concepts is based on the belief that the only way to gain control over your time is to prioritize your activities.

When you implement activity-based planning, you simultaneously:

- Improve your production and profits
- Work fewer hours
- Eliminate unneeded pressures.

Step 11 – Study the success habits of world class advisors.

Top advisors implement proven success habits. They know which activities have the greatest impact on their practices. To gain better control of your time, spend some time studying their priorities.

Here's a list of the six most important success habits I have uncovered:

- 1. Plan and prioritize** – The most important 15 minutes of each day is the time you spend planning. It doesn't matter if you do it at the beginning of the day for the current day or the end of the day for the next day, this activity sets the stage for daily success. Sure, planning could take more or less time depending on outside influences, but you need to build at least fifteen minutes of daily planning into your schedule.

A Lesson in Daily Planning

"You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it."
- Charles Buxton

I am fascinated by the way financial advisors manage time. Behavioral traits range from those who live in total chaos to those with an unfettering attention to planning the smallest detail. Many advisors proclaim to have a "personal system", but most cannot explain how "it" works. Some producers tell us they cannot plan their days because there are too many interruptions while others proclaim they don't have enough to do for planning to matter. These traits and justifications are exhibited by newer advisors as well as veterans, almost always with low achievers but even by top producers.

With these observations as a quick backdrop, let me suggest the single best method for getting (or keeping) time on your side: spend 15 uninterrupted minutes at the beginning of each day planning your priorities. Now...let me guess, you have heard this before. Well, like all good lessons, it bears repeating because we often-times forget to implement and maintain the ideas that make the most sense.

A Habit of Successful Advisors - I first picked up this success habit during an early career stop at a small financial planning firm. The sales manager insisted we start each day by organizing our calling time, plan development time and appointment time. It seemed rather basic, but the best planned days almost always produced the best results. They still do!

Since that first experience, I have had the good fortune of attending and teaching many classes on time management. (You might suggest I am a time management junkie - or a slow learner.) Each workshop seems to bring a new twist or a sharp reminder on a proven technique for getting more done in less time with less perspiration. But whether the concept is new or old, the foundational wisdom of spending 15 minutes preparing for each day is paramount.

"BUT...I can't afford 15 minutes...I'm too busy..." - This is a thought many of us have from time-to-time. And my only response is that this is one of the best investments of time you can make -- your returns will come in greater productivity, less stress and peace-of-mind. Stop for a minute and think about what you did yesterday, you may have thrown 15 minutes away at the water cooler, around the coffee pot, at lunch with another FA or on the phone with a golf buddy. We all have these tendencies and it only takes a small amount of discipline to re-capture some of this time and direct it toward the most important 15 minutes of the day.

Here is the best way to set the stage:

1. Put this time on your schedule everyday
2. Close your office door and let your staff know you should not be interrupted (no cell phone calls either)
3. Don't sneak peaks at: new emails, the internet, your quote machine, voice mails...
4. Simple is better, the more you try to complicate your efforts the less likely you are to stick to a discipline

Once you are set to go, whether you use a calendar system, an electronic organizer or a blank paper, follow these simple steps:

1. List those items you would like to accomplish that day, be reasonable -- not more than humanly possible
2. Prioritize your tasks by putting them in numeric order, groupings might include: have to do's, would like to do's and if I get a chance
3. If you do a great deal of telephone work, try to group your calling times together
4. Depending on your workload, block off 30 to 60 minutes of unscheduled time to handle interruptions
5. Go to it -- work through your priorities one-by-one in order of importance

How about interruptions? Each time someone comes to you during the day with an "urgent" request, ask yourself if it is more important than the item you are currently completing. If not, arrange for a specific time to get back to the request. Use the unscheduled time you earmarked on your calendar. Avoid doing it just because you think you can finish it quickly or it comes from a client. The 15 minutes you set aside at the beginning of the day to plan can be wasted when you allow other peoples priorities to become your own.

Less Stress, Better Outlook - As your planning time becomes part of your routine, you will discover a couple additional benefits: First, your highest priorities each day will move from important and urgent to important but NOT urgent. In other words, fewer last minute tasks and more items completed early - less stress. Second, you will have time to reflect on more than just your daily tasks as you find this takes up less and less of the 15 minutes. From goal setting to inspirational reading to the simple benefit of solitude, you will start your day refreshed with a more positive outlook.

Give this simple idea a try and you may find the first 15 minutes of your day to be the most important.

- 2. Schedule time for you** – We all have a tendency to schedule time for others (clients, prospects or teammates), but neglect setting aside time we may need to prepare a proposal, build a list, write a letter or develop a marketing campaign. As part of your daily planning process, look at your upcoming schedule for major events requiring advance preparation and block off time to allow yourself to get ready. This simple step will help you avoid the procrastination and last minute cramming which oftentimes leads to work that doesn't meet your highest standards.

How to Take the Best Vacation Ever

As a successful financial advisor, you have chosen one of the most challenging professions in the world. Entrepreneur, financial authority and community leader are among the many hats you may wear on a daily basis. The work you do for your clients, family, self and community is vitally important. You owe yourself and your loved ones meaningful time away.

Here are my 9 tips for taking the best summer vacation ever:

- 1. Don't wait until the last minute to plan your trip.** One of the best ways to turn a peaceful vacation into a stress-producing activity is waiting too long to plan. Worrying about finding vacant hotel rooms and paying last minute prices for airline tickets is almost certain to raise your blood pressure. Plus, when you give yourself at least a few weeks notice, you can more easily coordinate priorities and coverage with assistants, teammates or co-workers.
- 2. There is no such thing as "lost production".** In fact, I would argue that you gain productivity by taking time away. Burnout and exhaustion can be much more costly than time away from your business. Good planning and a well run team will keep you from missing a beat.
- 3. Watch out for the "long weekends" trap.** Long weekends are great, but in my opinion a real vacation should be at least 9 days long, simply a week plus a weekend. It takes that long to truly get your mind away from business. Too often advisors tell me they can't take a vacation, but to make up for it they're planning several long weekends. This may work for some, but my advice is take the long weekends AND a long vacation. You deserve it!
- 4. You can do something spectacular or do nothing at all.** We all relax in different ways at different times. Sometimes an exhilarating trip exploring faraway places is just the right medicine, while at other times a quiet week with great company and a good book is all you need. As you select your vacation destination, decide which alternative will have the most restorative power.
- 5. Money doesn't necessarily buy happiness.** A great vacation doesn't have to break the bank. We often skip over destinations which are in close proximity to our homes in favor of more exotic locations. Rent a lake house within a few hours of your locale or visit tourist spots in your neighboring states. You may be surprised with the treasures you uncover.

- 6. Stay in the moment, enjoy your companions.** My most memorable vacations have been highlighted by the quality of time spent with family and friends. A vacation should be time away from both work and the distractions of everyday life. When you are truly relaxed, rainy days at the beach playing board games with your kids can easily measure up to the awe-sharing moments of seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time.
- 7. Avoid email, telephones and the financial news.** Your team, your clients, the financial markets and life in general will go on without you, so don't try to be indispensable. Give an emergency number to someone who won't abuse it and vacation with confidence. Leave your laptop and Blackberry at home. Sure, checking voicemail and email may seem like a practical strategy to avoid post-vacation overload, but this routine will almost certainly infringe on your relaxation. (Tip - Schedule the first day you're back in the office as "catch up" day, no appointments or meetings.)
- 8. Send your top clients a postcard.** One of my coaching clients recently tried this idea (he sent me one too) and was overwhelmed by the positive reaction he received from his clients. This should be the only "work" you do while you're away. Simply pack a list with the names and addresses of your "A" clients (along with postcard stamps) and send them a brief note from your first stop.
- 9. Buy your teammates souvenirs.** You should thank the folks who keep your business on track while you are vacationing. The more you can personalize the gift the better, but don't be afraid to buy multiple copies of the same item. As they say, "it's the thought that counts."

As a recovering workaholic, I realize some of these ideas may make you nervous. But give them a try and you will have a vacation filled with unexpected pleasures.

Have fun!

- 3. Clients come first** – In this step, I'm not suggesting you become reactive and always drop what you are doing when a top client calls. At the same time, we know that the more time you spend in client-facing activities, the more successful your business will become. World class advisors are spending two-thirds or more of their time in front of clients and prospects on a daily basis. Keep this vital statistic in mind as you prioritize your day. Could you leave time for a few extra client calls today? Could your assistant schedule a couple extra prospect appointments later in this week or early next week?

Do You Need to Drop Everything When a Top Client Calls?

From setting aside time for planning to establishing benchmarks for client and prospect contacts, daily discipline is the foundation for a less stressful and more productive practice. You may have heard this before and probably believe it is easier written than done. As a financial professional, you are faced with the daily dilemma of sticking to your "plan" or stopping what you are doing to attend to an unanticipated request from an important client or prospect. Do you keep your day on track or is the service opportunity more important?

The answer does not have to be one over the other, it can be BOTH. With a little forward thinking, you and your team should be able to make everyone who calls into your office feel important and simultaneously stay on task. Consider these 6 simple techniques utilized by high performance teams:

- 1. Try not to answer your own phone** -- It may sound overly simplistic, but you cannot afford to do it all the time. This is not an "ego" issue; it is simply a matter of establishing a system for prioritizing your schedule. Once you answer, you are on the hook. If your receptionist or assistant answers the phone, facts can be gathered and an appropriate action (including putting the call through to you) can be taken.
- 2. "Publish" your schedule** -- Everybody on your team should be fully aware of all schedules. From time blocked for outgoing calls to appointments to open slots, sharing calendars is essential for good communication. You can avoid over-booking as well as maximize time slots that are available to be scheduled.
- 3. Pre-scheduled follow-up times** -- When you set up daily time blocks, consider specific times for returning calls and emails. A callback block(s) will allow your staff to let callers know when you will be returning calls, so only truly urgent issues get handled immediately. Most clients will view this as good service. Pre-determined email sessions cut down on the messages that pile up in your inbox and help you get through the important ones more efficiently.
- 4. Script your staff** -- Work through suggested language that will allow your staff to communicate your scheduling system to those who need your attention -- clients, prospects, others in your office, family and vendors. Language that indicates you are "not available to the phone and will be returning calls from 1:00 to 2:00" is much more specific and service focused than an "I will be sure he (she) gets your message".
- 5. Telephone appointments** -- When a general callback hour is not sufficient, empower your team to schedule phone appointments. If you designate telephone appointment blocks, both you and your clients can avoid leaving home and the office and accomplish important matters quickly. Telephone appointments are also great for uncomplicated sales presentations and in place of in-person client reviews when the discussion is limited.

6. End-of-day rule -- To highlight your commitment to service and to avoid getting backed up, return all calls and emails by the end of the day. Even when you may not have an issue resolved, a quick update call or email from you or your assistant is the mark of a professional team.

These ideas are both logical and simple, but often get overlooked. Give them a try and your team will be able to improve client service while getting more done in less time -- a powerful combination.

4. Plant some seeds – Your daily planning should incorporate a degree of prospecting activities to keep your new business pipeline flowing. If you're a veteran advisor, this may be a very small amount of time. You could even delegate this activity to a member of your team. If you're new to the industry, this might be your primary focus. All world class businesses require a consistent level of commitment to future opportunities. It's best not to ignore this activity until urgently required. Plan your day to include activities which plant new seeds.

5. Don't let the "dishes" stack up – For most of us, each day brings a certain number of "dirty dishes", those small tasks which require little time and are easy to "leave in the sink" for the next morning. These "dishes" could be a return call, an unanswered email, a thank you note to a client, or any number of other minute details of daily business life. Leave time in your day to polish these tasks off, this will allow you to start each day with a "clean sink."

6. Evaluate your progress – Finally, at the end of each day, measure your progress by asking yourself a few simple questions:

- Did you stick to your plan and priorities?
- Did you keep your appointments with yourself?
- Were you able to maximize the amount of time you spent with clients and prospects?
- Did you plant some seeds?
- Will you be able to start the next day with a clean plate?

The complications of daily life sometimes feel as if they have taken dead aim on our best intentions to be productive and successful. You may not always like your own answers to these questions, but keeping an eye on your daily success habits will have a major impact on your ultimate achievement.

How to Use Telephone Appointments to Regain Lost Time

Telephone appointments are simply pre-scheduled phone calls. They can be one of the best ways to recoup hours in your days. They may seem a bit awkward at first, but the discipline could have payoffs for your clients, your team, your family and yourself. Here' are 10 steps to get you started:

- 1. Schedule a team meeting**, even if your "team" is only you and the administrative staff you share with others in your office. During your time together discuss this article and brainstorm as to how you will build telephone appointments into your routines. You will probably find that the folks who regularly answer your calls and schedule your appointments will be full of creative ideas.
- 2. Which types of calls require appointments?** To get started, be sure you determine which of your call types are best suited for telephone appointments. Don't schedule yourself to the point you feel as if you can't make a call just to say hello to a client or to ask your spouse to dinner. Statement reviews, sales ideas, service initiatives and quarterly updates can all be accomplished during telephone appointments. Your general business style and client management process will dictate the best way to apply this concept.
- 3. Determine the amount of time different calls should be allocated.** Perhaps a financial plan review or a portfolio update is given 30 minutes while a sales call is allocated 10 minutes. You should also build at least a few minutes in before and after each call for preparation and de-briefing; this will keep your calls organized and your follow-up prompt.
- 4. Give your team responsibility for your calendar.** The use of telephone appointments necessitates giving up some control over your own calendar. This is not to suggest that your staff is given free reign to schedule appointments or calls at any time. Block off dedicated times each day for phone appointments and give your scheduler total control over filling this time. To get started, you may want to set aside only an hour or two per day for telephone meetings, but as you become more comfortable with them they could fill a significant part of your day.
- 5. Have a system for responding to all incoming calls the same day.** This is the ultimate way to show professionalism and friendliness, it also keeps you from initiating your own games of tag. Even when you don't have an answer to a question or time to give a call your full attention, either make a call yourself or have someone on your team get back to your caller with an update and timeline for follow-up.

- 6. For important incoming calls schedule phone appointments.** None of us wants to appear to be too inaccessible, so we take calls from certain people no matter the circumstances. Often-times the incorrect assumption in these situations is that the caller has an issue requiring immediate attention. This approach can be a drag on time and can send the wrong message (you have too much time on your hands) to clients and prospects. Most other professionals and executives have a way of organizing their incoming calls, you should too. Have your receptionist or assistant determine the purposes of incoming calls and when necessary schedule a specific telephone meeting.
- 7. For less important incoming calls use general call back time blocks.** Your callers usually don't become upset when you're not immediately available to the phone. They do get frustrated when they feel they cannot rely on you to call back or deal with their inquiry. To handle this misconception, set regular call back hours. For example, you set a policy that states you return phone calls each day both the half hour before you go to lunch and the last hour you are in the office. When a client or prospect calls into your office and it is not urgent, your receptionist simply states you are unavailable to come to the phone but regularly return phone calls at your pre-determined times. If the caller says this is inconvenient or requires greater attention, more appropriate action can be taken.
- 8. Set goals for outgoing calls to schedule phone appointments.** The best way to be sure your business will grow month in and month out is to spend as much time as possible talking with your clients and prospects. One strategy for keeping your day filled with productive dialogues is to set goals for each of your different call types -- sales, service and review. Perhaps you decide you want to have a certain number of phone appointments per week; challenge yourself and your staff to fill these predetermined time slots at least a week in advance. When you accomplish your goal, give an appropriate reward, like a team lunch.
- 9. Telephone appointments may also work for other members of your team.** Every member of your team could benefit from having more hours in the day and therefore could benefit from the use phone appointments. Although, in a general sense, some members of your team need to be more "reactive" to the day's events, there are definite tasks that could be scheduled. This will save time and allow you to deliver a higher level of client service. As an example, your service manager could set a time with each of your new clients to proactively review their first monthly statement.
- 10. Don't let your voice mail get in the way.** Your voice mail system, when used properly, can add to your efficiencies and promote a higher level of service; the key is the message you leave for your callers. Consider all the steps we have outlined above for scheduling call backs and phone appointments, incorporate these concepts into your messages. Use phrases like: "I return all calls by the end of the day," "if you would like to schedule a phone appointment, dial ___ for my assistant" or "if your call requires immediate attention, dial ___ and ask for my assistant." Of course, be sure you and your team truly do what your messages say.

Step 12 – Planning your ideal day.

With these success habits in mind, think about your typical day, and decide which activities are truly productive. Most likely, meeting and talking with clients and prospects will top your list. On the flipside, consider unproductive activities that you could minimize or eliminate.

Once you understand your priorities, you are ready to create your ideal day. Your ideal day will expand into weeks and months.

Your success is founded on organizing and executing a day filled with activities that will lead to increased business and achieving your goals. (You can also review the Planning Your Ideal Day exercise located in Appendix I.) With escalating industry complexities and compliance regulations along with a growing number of distractions, it becomes more and more vital to focus your attention on the activities that will lead to our success.

You may want to begin by asking yourself some questions:

- **How do you feel at the end of each day?** Are you frustrated? Do you feel as though you haven't accomplished as much during the day as you had hoped to accomplish?
- **How do you feel at the beginning of each day?** Are you excited to get to work? Do you have a plan laid out that tells you exactly what you are going to do and when you are going to do it during the course of the day?
- **What kind of pressure do you put on yourself each day?** Do you set expectations you are unable to reasonably meet? Do you let others put pressures on you? Do you try to manage daily outcomes that are out of your control?
- The biggest question of all: **Are you too busy?**

If these questions make you feel uncomfortable, this step in your 90 day journey will become invaluable. Don't just try to fix the symptoms. Develop routines that take you out of your comfort zone and allow you to make lasting improvements.

Begin with a Simplicity Pledge.

Take the Simplicity Pledge

Stop...you may be in danger of overcomplicating your business! Need proof? Conduct a quick self-diagnosis. Do you suffer from any or all of these symptoms?

- You have tried to spend less time in the office, but most days you end up working longer hours than planned.
- Sometimes you can't recall the last time you spoke with one of your top clients.
- Your assistant or another member of your team is actually looking for more to do while you have more on your plate than you can handle.
- Ideas for capturing new clients regularly fill your mind, but you never seem to make any meaningful progress.
- Your stack of must read articles and research reports is growing out of control and you worry that you might miss something important.

Enough...you get the point. You work in an industry which brings many opportunities, but is also quite demanding. And sometimes, when you lose focus, it can feel like you are spinning out of control.

To combat these anxieties and keep your business from becoming overly complicated, consider taking the "Simplicity Pledge" – a basic vow of abstinence from the common traps of everyday practice management. As long as you have your integrity in place and your clients' best interests at heart, it is a sure fire way to get more done in less time with less stress.

Repeat after me: "From this point forward, I resolve to make my business life less complicated! I commit to a 5 hour work day. I will call all my "A" clients during the first 2 weeks of each month. I have put my assistant in charge of scheduling. I obtain the majority of my new clients through referrals. I discard all newspapers, magazines and research reports that I don't read the same week I receive them."

Feel better? Well, maybe not yet, but you will if you turn these 5 key strategies into meaningful success habits. Let's look at them one at a time:

- 1. I commit to a 5 hour work day.** To be more specific, this means spending 5 hours each day actively engaged with current and future clients. It doesn't matter if the time is spent on the phone or in-person, no activity will simplify and grow your business more effectively. While the typical advisor only spends a couple hours each day in client-facing activities, high performers excel at making their client time a priority. Sure, they may need some additional time for planning and preparation, but when they follow the other strategies in this pledge they work less and have more time for their other pursuits.
- 2. I will call all my "A" clients during the first 2 weeks of each month.** You probably generate more than 80 percent of your fees and commissions from the top 10 to 20 percent of your clients. These folks expect and deserve special attention. Although sending letters and hosting special events is worthwhile, nothing beats a personal call to share an idea or just say hello. When you make these contacts a monthly priority, you will generate new business, referrals and a lot of goodwill.

- 3. I have put my assistant in charge of scheduling.** If you are the rainmaker for your practice, don't feel as if you have to do everything for yourself. You should delegate as many non-essential activities as possible. One of the best (and toughest) places to start is by relinquishing control of your schedule. When you work with your assistant to establish scheduling parameters and priorities, your productivity will improve. You will gain a sense of freedom that will allow you to focus on the most important aspects of your practice.
- 4. I obtain the majority of my new clients through referrals.** Stop wasting time on inefficient prospecting. As you spend more time with clients, turn them into advocates. Talk with them about the way you grow your business. Specifically mention the names of people you have researched who they may know and ask for their advice. This is the fastest way to gain meaningful referrals and avoid unnecessary prospecting.
- 5. I discard all newspapers, magazines and research reports (paper and electronic) that I don't read the same week I receive them.** One of your greatest causes of frustration probably comes when you feel as if you have fallen behind on your "to do" list. At the same time, many of your seemingly important activities may just be distractions that don't really help you advance your business or your relationships. Perhaps the biggest culprit in this scenario is the amount of reading and research crossing your desk on a daily basis. As the stacks grow and your inbox overflows, you feel like you are missing something. When you have a process for eliminating these distractions, your productivity will increase.

That's it, 5 proven strategies for simplifying the way you run your business. Take the pledge to eliminate needless complication. (Instructions are contained in Appendix J.)

With your Simplicity Pledge firmly in your mind, you can now better plan your ideal day. Like your pledge, it should not be complicated. Consider these key points and action steps (You can also review the Planning Your Ideal Day exercise located in Appendix I.):

Decide what's important. Usually, the more time you spend with clients and prospects the more your business grows. This means you need to prioritize the time you spend in this activity – calls, appointments and meetings. What else do you do on a regular basis that makes a big difference to your success? Create a list of these success habits.

Create your ideal day. On a blank calendar, create blocks of time for each of these priorities. Ask yourself how you would organize each day if there were absolutely no interruptions. It may sound unrealistic, but it won't work if you don't at least give it a try.

Replicate and extend your ideal day. Now, extend your daily schedule into weekly and monthly calendars. Make adjustments to reflect activities you need to conduct at these intervals – i.e. weekly team meetings. Not everyday can be the same, but they should reflect many similarities.

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Communicate your ideal schedule. Your team and the other folks who support your practice need to understand your schedule. They'll be able to support your priorities.

Live your day. This is probably the hardest part. You have to break yourself of bad habits and exercise more discipline. Again, your ideal day won't work if you don't try. Just do it.

When you plan your ideal day, you will be happier and your clients, family and team will all be beneficiaries. If you need additional help, please go to Planning Your Ideal Day in Appendix I. This appendix contains more detailed strategies for developing your ideal day and deciding what matters most.

Closing Thoughts



That's it!

You now have "A 90 Day Roadmap for Creating Outrageous Success". Follow these steps if you're serious about re-energizing your business.

The results will speak for themselves.

Don't forget, financial advisors who strive for outrageous success are ahead of the pack. They don't allow themselves to become victims of circumstances. They commit to consistent success habits and the end result is nothing short of spectacular.

You also need to remember that true shortcuts are rare. But you can implement simple strategies that produce spectacular results over short periods of time. You may have to follow the directions, but a quick payoff usually makes it more than worthwhile.

Amazing results can be achieved in as little as 90 days.

This book walked you through the process for combining your vision and your success habits with our 90 day roadmap for achieving outrageous success. Our approach has produced amazing results time and time again. Take advantage of this proven process.

You will move to new levels of success – outrageous success!

Learn More:

If you would like to learn more about the topics presented in this book, feel free to visit www.EncoreAdvisor.com. Our membership-based website contains a unique combination of tools, tips and actionable strategies designed specifically for financial advisors. You're welcome to take a test-drive by signing up for a **14 day trial membership**.

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Appendix – 90 Day Roadmap Tools

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Appendix A – Create a Simple Business Plan

Step 1: Define Your Metrics, Look Back, Identify Your Success Gap

Overview

By reviewing key statistics, this exercise will help you review the current status of your business. You will also look ahead and begin to set levels for where you would like to take these business development metrics. Finally, you will calculate the gap between where you are today and where you would like to be 12 months from now. Next week, we will show you how to plan to bridge this “success gap.”

Questions to Contemplate

Before you begin this exercise, you should spend a few minutes considering the 5 questions below. The direction you set for your business is unique to you and your team – no 2 practices are exactly alike. In addition to professional priorities, personal interests can also have a significant influence.

- How do you measure your success?
- How are others measuring your success?
- Are you truly committed to activities that will help you be successful?
- Do you have enough time for yourself and your family?
- Are you comfortable with your planning and goal setting process?

1. Define Your Metrics – Where are you headed? There are many metrics by which you may measure your success. Some of these numbers may be industry or firm driven, others may be individual preferences and still others may be the result of your personal circumstances. In the space below record your goals for the key metrics which are important to you and your business. Only post numbers in the categories you would like to measure and create your own categories as necessary.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| • Assets Under Management | \$ _____ |
| • Gross production/revenues | \$ _____ |
| • Fee-based revenues | \$ _____ |
| • Total number of current client relationships | _____ |
| • Average relationship size | \$ _____ |
| • Average client liquid net worth | \$ _____ |
| • Ideal number of new relationships per month | _____ |
| • New estate planning cases per year | _____ |
| • Return on assets | _____ % |
| • Dedicated hours per week for business | _____ |
| • Dedicated hours per week for family | _____ |
| • Other | _____ |

2. Look Back - Where are you now? For the categories you selected in the last step, record your current statistics below. If these numbers are not easily available, be sure to take time to do your homework. The more time you put into this exercise, the more effective it will be.

- Assets Under Management \$ _____
- Gross production/revenues \$ _____
- Fee-based revenues \$ _____
- Total number of current client relationships _____
- Average relationship size \$ _____
- Average client liquid net worth \$ _____
- Ideal number of new relationships per month _____
- New estate planning cases per year _____
- Return on assets _____%
- Dedicated hours per week for business _____
- Dedicated hours per week for family _____
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

3. Insert your responses from the steps above into the chart on the next page. Column "A" should include only those categories you have determined as being important to you practice. For your convenience we have listed several key categories as well as left several blank spaces. In Column "B" list your goals from step one. Likewise, list your current statistics from step two in Column "C".

4. Identify Your Success Gap. In Column "D" compute your "success gap" - the difference between where you are today and where you would like to be 12 months from now. This gap will help you identify your priorities and determine your success habits for the next 12 months. We will show you how to put this concept to work in our exercise next week.

Column A	Column B Where are you headed?	Column C Where are you now?	Column D "Success Gap"
Assets Under Management			
Gross Production / Revenues			
Total Relationships			
Average Relationship size			
New Relationships per month			
Return on Assets			

Step 2: Prioritize Your Goals

In establishing goals, one of the keys is not to go overboard. Business planning often gets bogged down by the confusion of too many competing goals. We encourage our coaching clients to keep it simple by focusing on no more than 3 to 5 goals at a time. With this thought as a backdrop, your next step is to list in order of importance your top goals for the next 12 months. These goals should be based on the "Success Gaps" you uncovered in step 1.

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

4.) _____

5.) _____

Step 3: Define Which "Success Habits" will Lead you to Your Goals

Review some of our categories and suggestions for "Success Habits" listed below. Begin formulating your ideas in the right hand column. On the next page, create a list of your "Success Habits" for the next 12 months in priority order. Once you are done, combine these "Success Habits" with your goals and you will have roadmap for breaking through your "Success Gaps" over the next 12 months – you will be on your way to your best year ever.

Activity Categories

Your Potential "Success Habits"

Phone Calls

- ✓ Current Clients
- ✓ Prospects: active/inactive

Appointments

- ✓ Current Clients
- ✓ Prospecting
- ✓ Networking/Connections

Correspondence

- ✓ Letters
- ✓ Emails
- ✓ Handwritten notes

Meeting Time

- ✓ Weekly/Daily Team
- ✓ Branch/Branch Manager
- ✓ Quarterly/Annual Team

Research Time

- ✓ Reading, conf. calls

Service/Follow-up time

- ✓ Research
- ✓ Call backs
- ✓ Correspondence

Planning Time

- ✓ Goals
- ✓ Campaign Creation
- ✓ Seminar Creation
- ✓ Presentations/Proposals

Family and personal time

Evaluation and review

Prioritize and Get to work on Your "Success Habits"

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

4.) _____

5.) _____

Make this year an outrageous success!

Appendix B – Define Your Ideal Client

The goal of this exercise is to help you identify your ideal client relationships and refine your definition of an ideal client. Once this is done, you are in a better position to offer your top relationships a higher level of attention and convert them into advocates of your practice. In turn, you are better able to structure your prospecting and referral activities to take advantage of this unique aspect of your business.

Instructions

The first 9 steps listed below help you complete the matrix on page 80 of this exercise. (You may also choose to make additional copies of these pages to include more clients in your analysis.) Once the matrix is complete, answer the Step 10 questions on pages 76 through 79. Finally, list your ideal client priorities on page 79.

Step 1 – List Your Top Relationships

In column A below, list the names of 20 to 50 of your highest revenue producing relationships. (Alternatively, you could create this list based on revenue potential or net worth.) To complete an even more in-depth analysis you may include more names.

Step 2 – How did they become part of your practice?

In column B, record how each client became part of your practice, use a rating system such as: R = referral, C = cold call, S = seminar, P = knew personally, N = networking. Feel free to create additional categories for your other client acquisition strategies, but don't overdo it. If one of the goals for better understanding your ideal client profile is to improve your client acquisition process, this will be critical information.

Step 3 – What are their occupations?

In column C, list the current occupation of your top clients. When considering what constitutes an ideal relationship, you may find that many of your clients work for the same company, have similar occupations or work in a common industry. This information is very valuable as to refine your client service model or research client acquisition strategies.

Step 4 – Do you enjoy working with them?

In column D, indicate with an E those clients with whom you enjoy working the most. You may sometimes find yourself working with large relationships you don't enjoy or who are in some way difficult for you and your team to manage. Although you may not choose to eliminate these clients from your practice, you may choose to avoid adding new ones with similar characteristics.

Step 5 – Do they readily accept your advice?

In column E, use a 1 to indicate those clients who quickly accept your advice, a 2 for those who sometimes require additional prodding and 3 for those who always require an extra dose of convincing. Some advisors find it difficult to work with clients who need to be "sold" every time a recommendation is made, while others enjoy the

salesmanship. Acceptance of advice may therefore play a role in your definition of an ideal client relationship.

Step 6 – Are they an advocate for your business?

In column F, indicate with an A each client you believe could be an advocate for your practice. (An advocate is a center of influence who helps you promote your business.) Circle the A if they have given you a referral in the past.

Step 7 – What do you know about their interests?

In column G, indicate activities, organizations or affiliations with which your clients are associated. This step will help you get a sense of your ideal clients' interests, allowing you to provide more personal service. This research will also allow you to explore niche market opportunities your ideal clients may help you approach. Often times, you will find that your clients fall into easily identifiable target groups making your referral and prospecting efforts easier.

Step 8 – What is their financial standing within your practice?

In column H, give each client a financial segment rating of A for top clients, B for your middle group, C for the lowest tier or U if this information is unknown. Your rating system will be dependent on the financial measures you are currently using in your practice. If, for example, you utilize investable assets as a key measuring stick; your A group may be those with \$1,000,000 or more, your B group could be those with between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 and your C group could be those with less than \$500,000.

Step 9 – Do you have a recent profile?

Indicate in column I the last date on which you updated each client's profile. Ideal client relationships require the utmost care and attention which begins with thorough and regular profiling. Financial information is important, but a good profile also includes questions surrounding their perception of your service, risk tolerance, investment goals and personal objectives.

Step 10 – What are your ideal client priorities?

Now that you have completed your ideal client matrix, you have a great deal of information upon which you can further build and refine your ideal client relationships. Listed below are several critical questions which will help in prioritizing your activities. Answer these questions in the space provided and use the final page to list your next steps in priority order.

Step 10 – 10 Questions for Establishing Priorities

1. With the information available in your matrix, do you see patterns that will help you define or re-define your definition of an ideal client?
 - For example: your ideal clients work in a similar industry, readily accept your advice, fall into your highest financial segment and are open to giving you referrals.
 - Action item: in the space below record your definition of an ideal client.

Notes: _____

2. Who are your current ideal clients? Do you have a method for providing them with the highest levels of communication and service? Who may have the potential to become an ideal client?
 - Action item 1: create a field in your contact management that will allow you to quickly identify members of this group.
 - Action item 2: build a communication schedule which will allow you to formalize your ideal client service model.
 - Action item 3: create a similar field in your contact management system for this secondary tier of clients.

Notes: _____

3. How did your ideal clients become part of your practice? Are there one or two techniques you could leverage for building client acquisition campaigns? Does this help you better define your target market(s)?
 - Action item 1: list client acquisition strategies you may use in selecting new clients for your business.
 - Action item 2: list potential target markets for your practice.

Notes: _____

4. Are similar companies, occupations or industry connections evident among your ideal clients? If so, will these similarities allow you to develop specialized services to improve your offerings to these segments of your ideal clients? Does this information help you better define your target market(s)?
- Action item 1: list companies, occupations or industry groups on which to conduct additional research for service and marketing opportunities.
 - Action item 2: list potential target markets for your practice.

Notes: _____

5. Is ease of doing business important to your definition of an ideal client relationship? If so, are there any similarities among those relationships which are most enjoyable? Does enjoyment necessarily translate into ease of doing business? Are clients who are more deliberate in reviewing your advice more capable of delivering greater sales opportunities?
- Action item: record phrases or bullet points which reflect the less tangible aspects of your ideal client relationships. (You may choose to add these descriptions to your answer to question 1 above.)

Notes: _____

6. Do your clients' interests, organizational connections or affiliations have a bearing on your definition of an ideal client? Does this help you increase your ability to service or market to a refined target market?
- Action item: list clubs, civic groups, hobbies, boards, charitable affiliations or other interests your top clients have in common.

Notes: _____

7. What financial metrics play into your definition of an ideal client? Do all of your ideal clients fall into your top financial segment? Are you better able to service clients with greater financial wherewithal? Do you enjoy working with clients who have a moderate net worth but aspire to achieve greater financial success?
- Action item: consider adding a strict financial requirement to your definition of an ideal client. This may help you better target future clients as well as develop services for your best relationships.

Notes: _____

8. Do you receive regular referrals or are they sporadic? Do you receive most of your referrals from a small group of clients? Does this make them an ideal client? Are referrals important to your definition of an ideal client? Is advocacy part of your regular client dialogue?
- Action item 1: if referrals are important to the long-term success of your business, analyze where and when you get the most referrals. Build on this knowledge to create a referral strategy.
 - Action item 2: one option for a referral strategy is promoting advocacy among your ideal clients. Consider introducing the concept of advocacy to your ideal clients.

Notes: _____

9. Are you doing a good job of profiling your clients at least once each year? Will a concerted effort toward profiling your clients now help you refine your definition of an ideal client relationship? Will profiling help you build advocacy and referrals?
- Action item: consider implementing a schedule for re-profiling your clientele to uncover new business opportunities, generate referrals and classify your ideal relationships.

Notes: _____

10. What are your ideal client priorities?

- Action item: now that you have developed an ideal client matrix and have asked yourself the above questions, you need to build priorities for strengthening and leveraging these relationships. Use the next page to pull action steps from your worksheet notes and put them to work in your business.

Ideal Client Priorities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Appendix C – Client Profiling Tools

- 1.** Ideal Clients Profiling Campaign
- 2.** All Clients Profiling Campaign
- 3.** Alternative Client Profiling Letters
- 4.** Follow-up Letter
- 5.** Preferred Client Profile Questionnaire (for use with all letters)
- 6.** Client Survey Campaign

Ideal Clients Profiling Campaign

Overview

1. The goals of this campaign are to be sure your Ideal Clients know they are your best clients, uncover additional opportunities to do business and begin building the basis for regular referrals or references to members of their affinity groups.
2. Create a list of your Ideal Clients as described in Step 4 (Week 3).
3. At the rate of 5 to 10 per week, mail the Ideal Client letter and the Preferred Client Profile until all of your top clients receive them. Include your brochure or resume and a return envelope.
4. Call each client within 5 business days to schedule a time to review the profile in person.
5. In reviewing the questionnaire with the client, be sure to focus on identifying new assets you may be able to manage, new financial goals and how you may be able to encourage referrals to members of their affinity groups.
6. Follow this meeting up with a personalized thank you note or gift.
7. If you have uncovered specific investment or service needs, be sure to follow up.
8. Call the client after 2 weeks and mention specific names to them of people to whom you would like to be referred or be able to use the client's name when contacting.

Profiling Letter – Ideal Clients Only

Ms. Ideal Client
2008 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear Ideal,

A Special Thank You and Update

As we begin a new year (quarter), I (we) wanted to take time to thank you for being such an important part of my (our) practice. In addition to being appreciative of the business we have done together; your loyalty and willingness to share time and ideas have added greatly to the way I (we) do business with all of my (our) clients. You have helped put perspective on the investment environment in a way that helps remind me of how important the work I (we) do is to the financial well-being of my (our) clients.

Though we talk fairly often, I (we) also want to sit down with you and be certain I (we) have a thorough understanding of all of your goals and objectives. To that end, please find enclosed a Preferred Client Profile that you can either send back before we meet or we can review at our meeting. The information obtained from this questionnaire will help me (us) continue doing the kind of work you have come to expect.

I (or assistant's name) will call you early next week to set a time. Thank you again for your advocacy.

Sincerely-

Top Producer

P.S. Please don't let the profile overwhelm you. Though it may seem lengthy, it is one way I (we) can be certain you, as an important client, receive the type of service you deserve. We can always finish it when we meet.

Special Note: The profiling questionnaire referenced in each of these letters is located at the end of this appendix.

All Clients Profiling Campaign

Overview

1. The goals of this campaign are to begin better segmenting your clients, uncover additional opportunities to do business with existing clients and begin building the basis for regular referrals or references to members of their affinity groups.
2. Create a list of your clients as described in this Step 4 (Week 3).
3. Mail the “all clients” letter and the Preferred Client Profile (questionnaire) until all of your clients receive them. Include your brochure or resume and a return envelope.
4. All Returns – within 5 days of all returned questionnaires, call the client to set up an appointment to review their responses
 - In reviewing the questionnaire with the client, be sure to focus on identifying new assets you may be able to manage, new financial goals and how you may be able to encourage referrals to members of their affinity groups.
 - Follow this meeting up with a personalized thank you note or gift that includes agrees upon action steps.
 - If you have uncovered specific investment or service needs, be sure to follow up.
 - Take the opportunity to now segment this client as appropriate.
5. Non Responders – Resend the letter after 60 days
6. Repeat the process annually



Profiling Letter – All Clients

Ms. Client
2008 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear Valued Client,

Thank You and Update

As we begin the new year (quarter), I (we) wanted to take time to thank you for being an important part of my (our) investment practice. As you know, I (we) believe in understanding your total financial picture to ensure we are presenting the best solutions to help you achieve your goals.

To that end, I (we) would like to sit down with you and be certain I (we) have a thorough understanding of all of your goals and objectives. Please complete the attached profile and return it to us in the enclosed return envelope. Once we receive your information, we will call you to set up a meeting. We can then more thoroughly review your goals, answer questions and set direction for the next 12 months.

Financial needs can change frequently as we move through life and the information obtained from this profile and our meeting will help maximize our understanding of your financial aspirations and present the best possible solutions as we work together in the years to come.

Thank you again for your advocacy.

Sincerely:

Top Producer

P.S. Please don't let the profile overwhelm you. Though it may seem lengthy, it is one way I (we) can be certain you, as an important client, receive the type of service you deserve. We can always finish it when we meet.

Special Note: The profiling questionnaire referenced in each of these letters is located at the end of this section.

Alternative Client Letters

(Although these letters are written as New Year letters, they may easily be adapted for other occasions.)

New Year Letter – Short Version

Dear (personalize),

Making the Most of 20--

As we begin the New Year, we feel it is important to spend time with each of our clients. In conducting reviews this year, we have 4 objectives:

1. Evaluate our progress in 20--
2. Review and clarify your financial goals
3. Discuss new tax, IRA and retirement planning considerations
4. Set priorities for 20--.

With this in mind, please complete as much of the enclosed wealth profile as possible and return it in the enclosed return envelope. Once we receive your information, we will call to set up a time to get together. Our meeting will be a time to fill in any missing information, answer questions you may have and set direction for the next 12 months.

Financial needs can change frequently. The information obtained from this profile and meeting will help maximize our understanding of your financial aspirations and help us to continue providing you with the best possible service and advice.

Sincerely:

Top Producer

P.S. Please don't let the profile overwhelm you. Though it may seem lengthy, it is one way we can be certain you receive the type of service you deserve. We can always finish it when we meet.

Special Note: The profiling questionnaire referenced in each of these letters is located at the end of this section.

New Year Letter – Long Version

Dear (personalize):

Setting the Stage for 20--

Welcome to 2006, we cannot thank you enough for your past business, loyalty and camaraderie. We look forward to another year of providing you with the highest levels of service and advice. You truly make our work worthwhile and pleasurable.

As we consider the challenges and opportunities which lie ahead in the New Year, there are several key considerations worth reviewing. From both big picture and individual client perspectives, we see much more reason for optimism than pessimism. The resiliency of our country and economy combined with disciplined personal planning will almost always lead to positive results.

The Big Picture

Though we do not profess to be economists or political scientists, there are 3 big picture issues to which we are paying the most attention – Interest Rates, Tax Law Changes and Global Turbulence. These topics have the potential to sweep the headlines and sway the overall economic landscape, so let's take a brief look at each one:

- 1. Interest Rates** – Whether you are considering your investment or loan portfolio, it is almost impossible to ignore the recent activities of the Federal Reserve. Nine consecutive interest rate increases have raised borrowing costs and caused many investors to reconsider their asset allocations. Although there is no way to know for certain if these rate increases are over, it appears they are close to an end. In general, this should be a positive for 2006.
- 2. Tax Law Changes** are even more unpredictable than interest rates. The discourse in Washington makes it difficult to know which priorities will be addressed. On balance, there seems to be a movement towards simplification. And though any change would have both supporters and detractors, any adjustment that will reduce confusion and encourage investment will be welcome.
- 3. Global Turbulence** is perhaps the most sensitive issue to address in this type of letter. Discussion of war, terrorism and loss of life evoke emotions which are not easily satisfied. At the same time, barring the unexpected, we are hopeful that the worst is behind us. If 2008 is a year in which our brave soldiers begin to return home, we should see a boost in overall morale as well as in the financial markets.

Updating Your Plans and Priorities

No matter the direction of any of these big picture issues, it is important that we stay focused on your personal plans and priorities. Though it is nice to have the wind in our sails, it is always better to have a sturdy ship with a logical destination. To be sure we get the New Year off to a successful start; we will soon be contacting you to review your financial plan in-person. In conducting our first quarter client meetings, we have 3 objectives:

1. **Evaluate your progress and clarify your goals** – First, we will take a look back at 2007 and determine how much progress we have made toward your long-term objectives. We also want to be sure we clarify our understanding of your goals and identify any new ones. This will help ensure that your asset allocation, retirement income projections and estate plans are up-to-date.
2. **Discuss your tax, IRA and retirement planning options** – These planning considerations are often complicated by modifications in tax laws and regulations. There have been a number of changes over the past year. We want to work with you and your tax advisor to be sure we understand your individual concerns and considerations.
3. **Feedback and advocacy** – Finally, we want to ask for your feedback on our work and share our philosophy on advocacy. Your opinion of how we are doing is important as we continuously strive improve our services. Advocacy allows us to add new clients to our business through careful selection and client referrals. This conservative approach allows us to control our growth and maintain our commitments to service.

2008 Wealth Profile Update

We have enclosed a copy of our "2008 Wealth Profile Update." Please take some time to complete as much as possible and then return it to us in the enclosed envelope. Don't worry if you need to leave some blank spaces. Once we receive your information, we will call you to set up a time to get together. Our meeting will be a time to fill in any missing information, answer questions you may have and set direction for the next 12 months.

Thank you for taking time to read this rather lengthy letter and filling in the update form. We know this may seem like a big undertaking, but we also know this review will allow us to continue working with you to achieve your investment and financial objectives.

All the best,

Your Financial Advisor

P.S. Please don't let the profile overwhelm you. Though it may seem lengthy, it is one way we can be certain you receive the type of service you deserve. We can always finish it when we meet.

Special Note: The profiling questionnaire referenced in each of these letters is located at the end of this section.



Follow-up letter

Ms. Client
2008 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear (personalize),

Wealth Profile Key Findings

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss your 20-- Wealth Profile Update. The information we reviewed will allow us to continue to provide you with the service and advice you need as well as help you meet your financial goals. To summarize our meeting, below is a list of the Key Findings we uncovered during our discussion. I will be following up on each of these items as appropriate.

Key Findings:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

To help complete my work on these Key Findings, I will need the following additional information. My assistant will call you to see if he/she can assist you in pulling this documentation together.

Documentation needs:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Again, thank you for your time, we will work hard to use your profile update and our Key Findings to continue helping you work towards your financial goals.

Sincerely,

Your Financial Advisor

20-- Preferred Client Profile

Thank you for taking the time to begin completing this update.
Feel free to use the back of these pages or extra paper if necessary.

1. Do we need to update your personal information?

Name(s)

Address

Home Phone

Business Phone

Cell Phone

Personal email address

Business email address

Which email address may we use to contact you with important updates?

2. Have there been any changes to your employment related information?

Employer

Spouse employer

Current position

Spouse current position

Annual income (salary, bonus, other)

Spouse income

Do you have a company sponsored retirement plan(s)? Indicate **self or spouse** plan.

- Type (Pension, 401-k, deferred compensation, other):
- Value:
- Would you like us to review this plan **(yes or no)**?
- Have you set/changed your retirement date **(yes or no)**? Please list:

3. How are we doing?

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning needs improvement and 5 meaning we are meeting your expectations, how would you rate us on the following categories?

_____ Service, responsiveness to your inquiries

- Are you aware of any outstanding service issues?

_____ Communication, frequency of contact

- Should we be in more, less or about the same amount of contact?

_____ Planning and investment Advice, properly understand your goals

Please use the space below to indicate areas where you see need for **improvement**.

Please use the space below to list what you believe are **our strengths**.

4. Financial and Investment Goals and Objectives

What is your primary financial goal?

What other objectives do you have (list all)?

Have your investment objectives changed over the past year **(yes or no)**? Why?

Have the timelines changed for any of your objectives?

Do you consider yourself to be an **aggressive, moderate or conservative** investor?

What **percent of your investments** should be dedicated to **growth** and what percent should be allocated to **income**?

5. Risk concerns and interest rates

As it relates to investment volatility, would you say you feel differently today than you did 12 months ago?

If the stock market were to experience a year of double digit losses, would you expect your current overall portfolio to perform **better, the same or worse** than the market?

If the stock market were to experience a year of double digit gains, would you expect your current overall portfolio to perform **better, the same or worse** than the market?

Do you believe interest rates are heading **higher or lower**?

Do you expect the direction of interest rates to affect your current asset allocation - stocks, bonds, cash and alternative investments?

Do you expect the direction of interest rates to affect your loan portfolio?

6. Longer-term planning

What does long term mean to you? How many years out is long term?

Have you updated your **wills, trusts, life insurance policies or other estate planning** tools during the past year? If so, which ones?

Have you begun or are you considering planning for any **new financial goals** – (goals like retirement planning, education planning or charitable giving)?

Do you hold any retirement, investment or savings accounts which we may not be aware of and on which you would like a second opinion? If yes, please **list below**:

There have been several tax law changes relating IRA contribution limits, rollover considerations and minimum required distributions. Should we spend time reviewing your IRA's, rollover accounts and company sponsored retirement plans? **Please list** any specific concerns or considerations:

Do you have any income tax concerns **(yes or no)? Please describe**:

7. What other professionals are involved on your personal, financial, and investment planning?

Attorney (name and phone number)

Accountant (name and phone number)

Other (responsibility, name and phone number)

8. We will list “key findings” during our review meeting.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

9. We may request additional documentation during our review meeting.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

10. Our business grows only through the careful selection of new clients and referrals from our clients. Please let us know if you would like to make an introduction.

Client Survey Letter

Dear *(personalize)*,

For some of us the thought of school brings memories of report cards. You remember...the progress reviews and their impending arrival, no matter how much you studied or didn't study, brought on a certain amount of trepidation. "A" students sometimes fretted they wouldn't maintain their high marks, while those who were averse to schoolwork hoped they would avoid disaster. The outcome was usually not worth the worry and generally resulted in setting a fresh direction for future efforts.

As an important client of our practice, we would like to solicit your feedback by asking you to complete the attached client report card. This brief survey will only take a few minutes of your time. It will help us build on those aspects of our business that are working well and improve on any areas where you may see a need for improvement. There is no better way for us to provide the type of service and advice you deserve than to be sure we understand your expectations.

Should you have any questions or if you wish to discuss your ideas personally, please feel free to give us a call. Otherwise, we have enclosed a postage paid envelope for your convenience.

Thanks in advance for your input!

Sincerely,

(sign by hand)

Your Financial Advisor

P.S. We have a few openings for new client additions to our practice. If you know anyone who might benefit from our work, please let us know or give them our name.

Client Survey

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning needs improvement and 5 meaning we are meeting your expectations, how would you rate us on the following categories?

1. Service - our responsiveness to your inquiries

- _____ Overall team service
- _____ My personal service
- _____ (*list other team members*) service

Are you aware of any outstanding service issues?

1.

2.

2. Communication, frequency of contact

- _____ Contact by telephone
- _____ Communication by mail
- _____ In-person meetings

Would you like to be on our private email list? (Yes or No) If so, please list your email address here _____.

Should we be in more, less or about the same amount of contact throughout the year?

Communication suggestions:

3. Advice, properly understand your goals

- _____ Investment and financial goals
- _____ Tolerance for risk
- _____ Personal goals and objectives

Have there been any changes in your personal or financial circumstances of which we should be aware? (Yes or No)

Please explain:

S

Please use the space below to indicate any additional areas where you see need for **improvement**.

Please use the space below to list what you believe to be **our strengths**.

We believe it is important to **recognize members of our team** who are exceeding your expectations. Please list any names below along with your comments.

Would you like us to call you to discuss this report card or any other questions relating to our work together? (Yes or No)

References - We have a few openings for new client additions to our practice. If you know anyone who might benefit from our work, please let us know or give them our name.

Appendix D - Advocacy Agenda

Your Company Agenda Your Client Review Meeting February x, 20--

1. Review 2007 performance
 - a. Account 1
 - b. Account 2
 - c. Account 3
 - d. Overall performance

2. Goals and objectives
 - a. Our understanding of your current goals
 - b. Are there any new considerations?

3. Market and Interest rate concerns
 - a. Effects on current investments
 - b. Effects on current debt portfolio

4. Outside holdings – second opinion
 - a. Bank accounts
 - b. IRA accounts
 - c. Retirement plans
 - d. Other

5. Advocacy
 - a. Name 1
 - b. Name 2
 - c. Name 3

Appendix E: Create Marketing Materials that Sell

Step 1: Answer 11 Crucial Questions

Step 2: Giving Your Words More Meaning

Step 3: Putting Your Marketing Material to Work

Step 1 – 11 Crucial Questions

Complete your "Story Worksheet" by answering the 11 questions below.

1. How is your **practice organized**?

Select your current **business** model below and indicate whether you have an all inclusive practice or if you rely on strategic partners. These answers will correspond with items 1(a) and 1(b) in your story template.

1(a):

_____ Team – one primary financial professional with a staff or strategic partners of 2 or more people that fills multiple unique roles; "we" equals the entire team.

_____ Partnership – more than one financial professional with a dedicated staff of one or more people, "we" could equal the entire team or just yourself and a key partner(s).

_____ Sole Practitioner – individual financial advisor with a dedicated or shared assistant, you could be an "I" or a "we" business.

_____ Other - please describe _____

1(b):

Circle one: **all inclusive** or **strategic partnership**.

2. What single term best describes your **business style**?

Choose one **business style** term for your business and utilize your answer for question 2 in your story template.

- _____ Financial Advisor
- _____ Financial Consultant
- _____ Investment Consultant
- _____ Stockbroker
- _____ Wealth Manager
- _____ Registered Rep
- _____ Retirement Planning Specialist
- _____ Insurance Specialist
- _____ Investment Manager
- _____ Financial Planner
- _____ Life Planner
- _____ Senior Advisor
- _____ Estate Planner
- _____ Registered Investment Advisor
- _____ Other - please describe _____

3. How would you describe your **predominant and ongoing "client management process"**?

In the space provided, please describe your **client management process** in the form of short sentences or descriptive phrases. Insert this text as item 3 in your story template. Examples: (a) *I walk each client through a disciplined process for asset allocation and investment manager selection.* (b) *We specialize in comprehensive wealth assessment, management and preservation.* (c) *Our practice focuses on helping our clients build positions in our core portfolio of small cap equities.*

4. How would you describe and what is your current **broker/dealer affiliation**?

Place a check by your broker/dealer affiliation in 4(a) and list their name on the line next to 4(b). These answers, if you choose to highlight them, will correspond with items 4(a) and 4(b) in your story template.

4(a):

- Independent firm/agency
- Small (local) firm
- Regional firm
- Wire house
- Insurance Company
- Bank
- Registered investment advisor
- Other, please describe _____

4(b):

List the name of your broker/dealer _____

5. What **value-added services** do you offer to compliment or support your overall client management process?

Please rank the **value-added services** listed below in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important. Avoid making this a “catch all” category, rank only those that truly support or are part of your client management process. List these terms in the spaces provided for question 5 on your story template.

- _____ Investment Management Consulting
- _____ Individual Portfolio Management (stocks, bonds, both)
- _____ Independent Stock and/or Bond Research
- _____ Asset Allocation (strategic or tactical)
- _____ Technical Analysis
- _____ Risk Management
- _____ Mutual Fund Portfolio Oversight
- _____ Wealth Accumulation
- _____ Wealth Management
- _____ Wealth Preservation
- _____ Retirement Needs Analysis
- _____ Strategies for Seniors (Baby Boomers)
- _____ Financial Planning (comprehensive)
- _____ High Net-worth Services
- _____ Estate Planning
- _____ Insurance Planning
- _____ Disability Income Planning
- _____ Other, please describe _____

6. What are the **primary product or service categories** you use to satisfy your clients’ investment, insurance or other financial planning needs?

If you were to describe your business by the **primary products or services** you recommend to your clients and prospects, which of the following would you choose? Rank as many as 5 of these terms in order with 1 being most important and 5 being least important. Include only those that relate specifically to your current offerings and place your answers in the spaces provided for questions 6 in your story template.

- _____ Tax Deferred Annuities (also consider terms for popular riders)
- _____ Fee based (only) planning
- _____ Mutual Funds (and related strategies)
- _____ Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs)
- _____ Separately Managed Accounts, Private Money Managers
- _____ Second-to-die (survivorship) Insurance
- _____ Laddered Fixed Income (bond) Portfolios
- _____ Life Settlements
- _____ Long Term Care
- _____ IRAs: Roth, Rollover...
- _____ Retirement Plans: 401(k), Defined Benefit, SEP...
- _____ Comprehensive Wealth Management
- _____ Equities/stocks – position builder, portfolio manager
- _____ Reverse Mortgages
- _____ Other, please describe _____

7. What are the **unique attributes** of your business?

In the space provided, please describe the **unique attributes** of your business. Create short sentences or descriptive phrases and place them in section 7 of the story template.

8. What is your **definition of an ideal client**? How would your **ideal clients describe you**?

8(a): In a short paragraph or bullet points, **describe your ideal client relationship**. Use the space provided below, this text will be inserted in the space marked 8(a) on your story template.

8(b): In a short paragraph or bullet points, **explain your ideal clients' description of you**. Use the space provided below, this text will be inserted in the space marked 8(b) on your story template.

9. Do you currently have a **mission, vision or philosophy statement** describing your practice?

Use the space provided below to list your **mission, vision or philosophy statement**; this text will be inserted in the space marked 9 on your story template. If necessary edit this text to reflect new ideas you are considering as you build or update your story. If necessary, you may also skip this question.

10. How does your **professional or educational experience** benefit your clients?

List your **professional or educational experience** in the column to the left below. In the right-hand column, describe each credential in terms that your clients and prospects will understand. This information will be used in section 10 of the story template.

<hr/>	<hr/>

Step 2 – Giving Your Words More Meaning

Use your answers from Step 1 along with the "Story Template" below to create a rough draft of your story. A sample rough draft is included for your reference. Use the space provided at the end of the template.

1. How is your **practice organized**?
 - Sole practitioner: (1a) My practice is a/an (1b) all inclusive (comprehensive) or strategic partnership
 - Team or partnership: (1a) Our Team/Our partnerships is an/a (1b) all inclusive (comprehensive) or strategic partnership
2. What single term best describes your **business style**?
 - as OR of (2)
3. What is your predominant and ongoing **client management process**?
 - dedicated to... (3)
4. How would you describe and what is your **broker/dealer affiliation**?
 - I/we are affiliated with the (4a), (4b), which is known for (branding tagline)... OR which is headquartered in... OR was established in...
5. What **value-added services** do you offer to compliment or support your overall client management process?
 - I/we add value to each client relationship through the use of... (5)
6. What are the **primary product or service categories** you use to satisfy your clients' investment, insurance or other financial planning needs?
 - Often times, I/we select ... (6) as important tools for implementing my/our recommendations for helping my/our clients achieve their goals.
7. What are the **unique attributes** of your business?
 - My/our business is proud of its reputations as/for... (7)
8. What is your **definition of an ideal client**? How would your **ideal clients describe you**?
 - I/we view my/our clients as... (8a)
 - Similarly, our clients tell us they value my/our work because... (8b)
9. Do you currently have a **mission, vision or philosophy statement** describing your practice?

S

- I/we summarize my/our commitment to my/our clients through my/our (mission, vision or philosophy statement) which says: ... (9)

10. How does your **professional or educational experience** benefit your clients?

- **Special note:** For teams and partnerships list separately for each member.
- My professional experience includes a (degree OR professional certification) from (educational institution OR certification organization) indicating my commitment to OR experience in... (10)

11. Which of your **personal experiences, hobbies or interests** will help your clients understand the non-business side of you and your practice?

- **Special note:** For teams and partnerships list separately for each member.
- From a personal perspective, my/our clients find it interesting to know: family AND/OR activity AND/OR hobby AND/OR community involvement... (11)

Sample draft:

1. How is your **business organized**?

- My practice is an all inclusive financial planning business.

2. What is your **business style**?

- As a Financial Advisor, I am

3. What is your predominant **client management process**?

- dedicated to a disciplined process for working with my clients to uncover and establish personal goals and turn them into a long-term plan for financial success.

4. How would you describe and what is your **broker/dealer affiliation**?

- I am affiliated with the independent firm, XYZ Securities and Insurance, which is known for its commitment to wealth management and preservation.

5. What **value-added services** do you offer to compliment or support your overall client management process?

I add value to each client relationship through the use of independent research, risk management and strategic asset allocation.

6. What are the **primary product or service categories** you use to satisfy your clients' investment, insurance or other financial planning needs?

- Often times, I select private money managers and tax deferred annuities as important tools for implementing my recommendations for helping my clients achieve their goals.

7. What are the **unique attributes** of your business?

- My business is proud of its reputations as providing an uncompromising level of client communication and support.

8. What is your **definition of an ideal client**? How would your **ideal clients describe you**?

- I view my clients as strategic partners because not only do I help them achieve their dreams, they reward me with advocacy which results in many new opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Similarly, my clients tell me they value my work because I treat them the same way I would treat a member of my family.

9. Do you have a **mission, vision or philosophy statement** describing your practice?

- I summarize my commitment to my clients through my philosophy statement, which says: "My clients are my most important asset; I treat each one as an individual with unique goals and aspirations. The longer my relationships with my clients endure, the more successful I will be."

10. What **professional or educational experience** do you want to emphasize?

- My professional experience includes a masters degree in economics from "The University" which gives me a terrific background for maneuvering the financial marketplace. I am also a Certified Financial Strategist (CFS) through an accreditation from the "The College" indicating my dedication to staying current with all the latest trends in the financial strategies business.

11. What **personal experiences or interests** will help your clients understand the non-business side of you and your practice?

- From a personal perspective, my clients find it interesting to know that I have been married to Lori for 20 years and we have 3 teenage boys. I am also actively involved with "The Club", currently holding the position of President. When I get some free time, I also enjoy the theater and have performed in several plays at "The Community Playhouse".

Sample Draft #2:

I am a Wealth Manager with 20 years of experience in serving the financial planning needs of my clients. In addition to providing highly personalized client care, my specialty is comprehensive wealth assessment, management and preservation.

My firm, _____, is committed to fostering one-on-one relationships between high net worth clients and highly qualified financial advisors. We are the 2nd highest rated global bank and manage over \$1 trillion in clients' assets.

I add value to each client relationship through the use of an Investment Management Consulting Process which includes strategic asset allocation as well as financial and estate planning.

Utilizing a fee-based advisory program, I work with clients to identify and hire top-rated money managers. Additionally, tax-deferred annuities, mutual funds, retirement plans and IRA rollovers accounts are sometimes utilized in developing custom solutions for my clients.

A trademark of my practice is open, honest and frequent communication. My emphasis has always been on integrity, stability and quality of service and advice. I view my clients as strategic partners because not only do I help them achieve their dreams, they reward me with advocacy which results in many new opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Many of my clients first came to me while in a transitional stage of life. Whether they were changing jobs, going through a divorce, recently widowed or coming into great wealth, they needed an advisor dedicated to helping them to overcome the financial stress and challenges these sudden changes entailed.

My clients describe me as bringing them a new level of service, one they have never before received from a financial advisor. They like the "soft touch" they receive while working together to formulate and implement a long-term financial plan.

I have been involved in the financial services industry for nearly 20 years and attended _____ majoring in English literature. I am single and live near the marina with my dog, _____. My passion is traveling and when home I enjoy tennis, hiking and golf.

Story Résumé or Brochure

Using the draft you created in Step 2, you now have all the text you need to create a "Story Résumé" or simple brochure. Tools and samples are shown below.

Résumé Tool: This document illustrates how you might create your résumé by listing the questions from the "Story Worksheet" we used in Steps 1 and 2 under the various résumé headings.

Your Name
Corporate Title, Business Style
Your Firm and/or Broker/Dealer

**Your Picture
Here**

Introduction:

- How is your **business organized**?
- What is your **business style**?
- What is your predominant **client management process**?

My Firm:

- How would you describe and what is your **broker/dealer affiliation**?

My Team:

- Optional

Our Commitment:

- What are the **unique attributes** of your business?

Value-added Approach:

- What **value-added services** do you offer to compliment or support your overall client management process?

Our Solutions:

- What are the **primary product or service categories** you use to satisfy your clients' investment, insurance or other financial planning needs?

Our Clients:

- What is your **definition of an ideal client**?
- How would your **ideal clients describe you**?

Our Philosophy:

- Do you have a **mission, vision or philosophy statement** describing your practice?

Education and Professional Experience:

- What **professional or educational experience** do you want to emphasize?

Personal Background:

- What **personal experiences or interests** will help your clients understand the non-business side of you and your practice?

Sample Résumé: This sample is based on the résumé tool shown on the last page using the sample answers from Step 2.

**Put Your
Photo Here**

**Janice Advisor
Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor
XYZ Investments and Insurance**

Introduction:

My practice specializes in comprehensive financial planning. As a Financial Advisor, I am dedicated to a disciplined process for working with my clients to uncover and establish personal goals and turn them into a long-term plan for financial success.

My Firm:

I am affiliated with the independent firm, XYZ Securities and Insurance, which is known for its commitment to wealth management and preservation.

My Team:

In addition to myself, Nicole, my client service specialist, has worked been an important part of my business for the past 10 years.

Our Commitment:

We are proud of our reputations for providing an uncompromising level of client communication and support.

Value-added Approach:

We add value to each client relationship through the use of independent research, risk management and strategic asset allocation.

Our Solutions:

Often times, we select private money managers and tax deferred annuities as important tools for implementing recommendations for helping our clients achieve their goals.

Our Clients:

We view our clients as strategic partners because not only do we help them achieve their dreams, they reward us with advocacy which results in many new opportunities for personal and professional growth. Our clients tell us they value our work because we treat them the same way we would treat a member of our family.

Our Philosophy:

Our clients are our most important asset; we treat each one as an individual with unique goals and aspirations. The longer our relationships with our clients endure, the more successful we will be.

Education and Professional Experience:

My professional experience includes a master's degree in economics from "The University" which gives me a terrific background for maneuvering the financial marketplace. I am also a Certified Financial Strategist (CFS) through an accreditation from the "The College" indicating my dedication to staying current with all the latest trends in the financial planning industry.

Personal Background:

From a personal perspective, my clients find it interesting to know that I have been married to Fred for 20 years and we have 3 teenage boys. I am also actively involved with "The Club", currently holding the position of President. When I get some free time, I also enjoy the theater and have performed in several plays at "The Community Playhouse".

Simple Brochure: As an alternative or in addition to a “Story Résumé”, you may want to develop a simple brochure. The sample below is easy to create, very professional looking and adaptable to many uses (fits easily into a business envelope).

To get started, you may want to create your résumé, allowing you to get your story into action immediately. At the same time, consider working with your marketing department or a local printer to develop a simple brochure like the one below to improve your overall quality.



Robert L. Brown, II
Executive Vice President
and Financial Advisor

Over eighteen years of investment industry experience
Licensed Supervisor and Registered Investment Advisor Representative with the NYSE/NASD

BS, Economics and Business

Specialization:
Investment Portfolio Management
Stock Selection
Asset Allocation

Mission

We take a friendly, caring and compassionate approach to helping our clients achieve their financial goals and therefore make a difference in their lives.

We do this by providing top quality investment, retirement and estate planning advice with a firm commitment to the highest ethical standards and integrity.

1138 Professional Drive | Williamsburg, Virginia 23185
(757) 564-0425 | (877) 771-3945 toll free





Wealth Management

We believe in the value of long term planning and in the importance of helping our clients create a solid vision for a secure and fulfilling financial future.

To that end, the Colonial Investment Group offers complete wealth management solutions. We begin with a thorough understanding of a client's current financial position and by having meaningful discussions about future desires and expectations. This work is followed by a structured series of recommendations that help the client understand what it will take to accomplish their goals. After a solution is implemented, we are committed to regular communication, review and follow up.

We know many of our clients consult with other legal and tax professionals, so we work to include these strategic partners in the planning process. Additionally, we have the ability to call on our own outside and in-house experts to ensure we have the necessary information to provide sound guidance. This work may include income tax and cash flow analysis, education planning, retirement projections, estate plan reviews and in-depth asset allocation modeling.

www.EncorePartners.com

Step 3 – Putting Your Marketing Material to Work

Client Service Initiative: One of the best ways to leverage your story is to be sure your clients understand the full scope of your business. **Sending your clients a copy of your new brochure and asking for their feedback demonstrates your respect for their opinion and it lets them know you are open for new business.**

This letter should be mailed in manageable quantities so that you have an opportunity to follow-up by phone to get feedback and pursue opportunities for new assets and referrals.

Mrs. Good Client
2007 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear **(PERSONALIZE)**,

We need your feedback!

Enclosed you will find a copy of our new brochure. It is designed to help our clients and prospective clients better understand the scope of our work. As a valued client, we wanted you to have one of the first copies. Your feedback would be appreciated.

We have also taken the liberty of enclosing a few extra copies. In addition to your having a copy for quick reference, we thought you might want to include a copy with your other important financial documents in case of an emergency.

Finally, if after reviewing this new brochure you think of anyone who might benefit from our services, we would appreciate your passing a copy along to them. Some of our best new relationships stem from references from our current clients.

Sincerely,

Encore Advisor

P.S. Please let us know if you need additional copies.

Prospect Conversion Campaign: No matter how hard you might try to communicate the value of your work to your prospective clients, they sometimes place you in a narrow stereotype and need an extra push. **If you have prospects you would like to turn into clients more quickly, send them a copy of your new brochure.** This extra step gives them an additional opportunity to see the many different ways you can help them accomplish their goals.

This letter should be mailed in manageable quantities so that you have an opportunity to follow-up by phone to get feedback and pursue opportunities for new accounts and referrals.

Mrs. Top Prospect
2007 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear **(Personalize)**,

While you're deciding: An update on our business

Enclosed you will find a copy of our new brochure. Though we do not yet work together, we feel this material will give you a better understanding of the capabilities of our business and may make your decision to work with us easier.

We have also taken the liberty of enclosing a couple of extra copies. In addition to your having a copy for quick reference, we thought after reviewing this material you might think of someone else who might benefit from our services. Some of our best new relationships come from references. Please let us know if you need additional copies.

Sincerely,

Encore Advisor

P.S. Your feedback on our new brochure would be appreciated.

Social Contacts: This letter should be mailed to the people you meet in social circumstances who you feel would benefit from your services. Networking events, parties, civic meetings and other social interactions represent golden opportunities for spreading your story.

When appropriate, exchange or gather business cards. Don't leave the follow-up to chance. **Send the letter below and set up a systematic method for leveraging these encounters.** Mail this letter within a couple days of a new introduction. You should follow-up further by phone to get feedback and pursue opportunities for new business and referrals.

In lieu of a letter, the text below could be used as the basis for a handwritten note.

Mrs. Social Prospect
2007 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23188

Dear Social Prospect,

We recently met at _____ and you expressed an interest in learning more about my business. At the same time, I believe we might work well together. To that end, please find enclosed a copy of my brochure which explains more about myself and my investment practice. Please let us know if you need additional copies.

I look forward to talking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

Encore Advisor

Connections Campaign: Whether you need a large dose of new clients or just a more steady flow of high quality relationships, one of your core strategies should be a steady drip campaign which focuses on your connections. This prospecting strategy positions you professionally and personally with people you know (or know of) who you believe would make ideal clients. **Your story should be included with all steps of this campaign.** For complete details on this campaign visit the EncoreAdvisor.com library.

Mr. Future Client
2007 Encore Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Dear PERSONALIZE,

Timely Ideas for (YOUR NICHE MARKET)

My name is (YOUR NAME), I work with (YOUR NICHE MARKET) helping them grow their wealth while minimizing risk (ADJUST TO FIT YOUR BUSINESS STYLE). I believe we might work well together and would like to introduce myself. Please be assured that I will never push myself or my services on you.

The purpose of this letter is to give you a sample of issues that are important to my clients. Of course, I also hope you will consider me when you are looking for investment ideas (CUSTOMIZE) or need someone to give you a second opinion on your financial plan (CUSTOMIZE).

My investment practice (CUSTOMIZE) is exclusively built (IS BEING BUILT) around referrals from satisfied clients and through the careful selection of people like you. This allows me to build my practice more professionally and avoids putting those I contact in an uncomfortable position. In fact, with the exception of this and possible future letters, I will not contact you unless you request additional information.

Enclosed you will find a copy of my resume (BROCHURE) and a research report (CUSTOMIZE) that summarizes my views on the current investment climate (CUSTOMIZE). Over the next few weeks, I will send you similar pieces that highlight ideas of importance to my clients. If at any time you would like additional information, please give me a call.

(OPTIONAL: As promised, I will not call you.) There are no strings attached to this service. I simply believe we may work well together and want you to be familiar with my services. If you would like to discontinue receiving these letters, simply write "remove" across the top of this page and return it in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,

(SIGN BY HAND)

Top Producer

(OPTIONAL) P.S. If you would prefer to receive these timely ideas via email, simply write your email address on this letter and return it in the enclosed envelope.

Appendix F – Contact Management Basics

A good contact management system can be the cornerstone for managing your client and prospect relationships. When you are organized and up-to-date with each of your contacts, you deliver better service and take advantage of timely opportunities. And though most financial advisors acknowledge these points, many advisors struggle to implement and maintain their own contact management process.

In our coaching work, we are sometimes amused by the elaborate contact management techniques we hear described. Sticky note, yellow pad and index card systems seem to abound even among more experienced practitioners. Although some of these manual systems may work, the majority result in wasted time and lost opportunities.

At the same time, many advisors who implement software based contact management systems allow the technology to get the best of them. For some, impatience with learning a new system may mean the program sits on a shelf. While for others, the time required to download data may mean a contact management project is started but never finished. And for still others, system maintenance allows good information to become stale and inaccurate. Despite these common pitfalls, using proven software is generally the best solution.

Now, let's review several contact management essentials. Whether you are implementing a new system or updating your current process, these basic requirements will allow you to streamline your routines. Simplicity is at the heart of the steps outlined below:

- 1. Choose (or dust off) your software** - Almost every time I am asked for software a recommendation, the request is preceded by a complaint about a program the questioner is currently using. And though I have my favorites, there is no "one size fits all" solution. Sound implementation, regular practice and patience can turn seemingly bad tools into indispensable resources. If you have a system which allows you to perform the rest of the basics outlined below, just stick with it. Please don't use software selection as an excuse for not getting started. If you don't have a software program, Brokers Ally, Act, Goldmine or even Microsoft Outlook could more than fit the bill.
- 2. Download every client and active prospect into your database** - This may sound overwhelming and is quite possibly the most cumbersome part of this coaching session, but it cannot be avoided. Budget some time each week and work with your assistant until you complete this step. Most contact management programs will allow you to import lists, so this may cut down on your time. Look for ways to download information from existing databases -- your back office systems, spreadsheets and other software tools may give you a head start. If you already have most of your contacts in your database, you can move straight to the next step.
- 3. Ensure basic data integrity** - Contact management tools are only as effective as the information you choose to keep. If you meticulously review (and maintain) your data, you will be able to run campaigns that range from general announcements to those which are highly personalized. Simple details, like making sure you have an accurate salutation, can mean the difference between a

positive and negative client experience. For example, if you normally call a client by her nickname, each correspondence you send should use this name and not a formal greeting. Here is a list of basic information you should ensure you have exactly right:

- a. Full names of clients and their spouses -- the names you would use on a formal letter.
 - b. Salutations -- the greeting you would use if you met the client or prospect in-person.
 - c. Address(es) -- every location to which you might need to send a correspondence (home, office, vacation home).
 - d. Telephone numbers -- all numbers by which you might make contact (including cell phones). Be sure to indicate the primary number.
 - e. Email addresses -- more and more clients and prospects prefer contact via email, so it is important to capture these addresses and ask for permission to use them.
 - f. Birthdays -- to add a level of personalization to your relationships, you should record the birthdays of all family members.
 - g. Occupation and employer -- this information will prove helpful in both service and marketing initiatives.
- 4. Establish a ranking system** - Not all clients or prospects want or need to be treated equally, so it is important to segment each of these groups by their importance to your practice. If you already have a segmentation system, assign a simple numeric (1,2,3) or letter (A,B,C) code to each category and designate a field in your contact management system for recording this ranking for each of your clients and prospects. If you do not have a segmentation system, you should make this one of your first priorities in developing and implementing your contact management process.
- 5. List a primary financial objective** - For financial professionals, the importance of a financial objective field in your contact management system is obvious. Try not to overcomplicate this data field, settle on basic objective categories and use the terms you select across your entire database. Depending on your business style, you could simply use terms like: liquidity, current income, growth and growth and income.
- 6. Denote significant personal interests** - When you become more familiar with the personal interests of your clients and prospects, you are in a better position to uncover new opportunities, generate referrals and establish target markets. Your contact management system should therefore allow you to record these interests along with any important affiliations your clients and prospects may have. Start by identifying general terms which may more universally represent your contacts. These common groupings could be based on your niche or target market focuses. Industry groups, demographic classifications, civic clubs and hobbies are all examples of this technique.

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- 7. Record a next action item and date** - Every member of your database should have a next action item along with a date for performing that action. This step will keep contacts from falling through the cracks and serve as a tool for building future new business opportunities.
- 8. Keep good notes** - Finally, each time you or a member of your team speaks with a client or prospect a record of that conversation should be noted. These notes represent the continuous dialogue you are having with your contacts. This practice will mean clients receive friendlier service and prospects feel like clients.

The 8 essential steps outlined above will help you streamline your contact management system. These basic requirements are not meant to be all inclusive; you can build on them over time. For now, use these tips to review and improve your current process.

Appendix G - Prospect Database Telephone Option

- You are calling your existing prospective clients, so you should not have to run your names through the do-no-call database. If there is any doubt on your part, check with your compliance manager.
- The call should be made by a marketing assistant, part-time caller or intern. The caller does not have to be registered, but again, be sure to run it past your compliance manager.
- This should be a very short call, less than 2 minutes each. Your goal should be to get responses from 10 to 20 prospects per hour. Have some fun and challenge yourself.

Hello, Mr./Mrs. prospect's name, this is caller's name, with the type of firm of your firm. I work with your name, who has been in contact with you in the past with type of ideas and type of ideas.

Your first name asked me to call because he/she is streamlining his/her business and only wants to stay in contact with investors who truly have an interest in our services. Since you have expressed an interest in the past, we wanted to talk with you personally. This is not a sales call.

As you continue to get to know us and consider us for your future financial planning needs, we want you to understand that our business is at a point we need to carefully select future clients for our practice. Do you have 30 seconds to answer a couple questions?

If no: Ask if they would like a future call back and if they don't you should take them off your list.

If yes: Great, as you know, we specialize in specialty one, specialty two and specialty three. We have set the minimum your financial metric for our future clients at \$---,---.

This means the primary interests of our current and future clients will fall into one or a combination of interests: interest one, interest two and/or interest three. **(Special note: If you are using a non-registered caller, DO NOT mention specific investment products, only your specialty "categories" – see accompanying article for examples.)**

Are any or all of these topics of interest to you?

If no: What areas do you focus on? Here you will stop and see if their description falls into one of your focus areas, if so, keep going. If not, this is a good reason to take them off of your list. Politely thank them and get off the phone.

If yes: Thanks, in order that you may learn more about whichever topic(s) they mention and our services, we would like to send you monthly ideas and updates. Do you prefer mail or email? Confirm their contact information, thank them and conclude your call. You are now in a better position to maintain future contact and convert them into clients.

Appendix H - Communication Calendar Tools

Use this sample calendar to decide on the number of communications you will be making with your various client and prospect segments.

Segment	Targeted	General	Medium	Who/What
A	12		Call	
	4		Meeting	
	6	6	Mail/email	
B	4		Call	
	2		Meetings	
	2	4	Mail/email	
C	1		Call	
		4	Mail/email	
Top Prospects	6		Call	
	2		Meeting	
	4	6	Mail/email	

Next, use this sample calendar to decide on themes and focuses for your ongoing client communications. The links will take you to resources in the EncoreAdvisor.com library.

<p style="text-align: center;">January</p> <p>Themes - New Year, Martin Luther King Day</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple New Year Letter and Profiling Exercise • Detailed New Year Letter with Three Optional Questionnaires <p>Possible Focus – General Financial Planning, Prior Year Goal Review, Wealth Management</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">July</p> <p>Themes - Independence Day (US), Canada Day</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Steps for Using Email in Your Ongoing Client Communications • 3 Client Letters - Saying Thank You Builds Lifelong Relationships <p>Possible Focus – Risk Management, Asset Allocation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">February</p> <p>Themes - Presidents' Day, Family Day (Canada)</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Planning Letter and Tip Sheet • Web Class: Capturing IRA Rollovers, Start with Your Clients <p>Possible Focus - Asset Allocation, Life Insurance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">August</p> <p>Themes – End of Vacation Season</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Good Reasons to Call Your Clients NOW • Client and Prospect Handholding Letters for Bad Markets <p>Possible Focus – Alternative Investments</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">March</p> <p>Themes - St Patrick's Day, DST begins, Easter</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Appreciation Letter • Ultimate Client Experience: Daylight Saving Time Client Letter • 3 Ideas for Getting the Most out of the Tax Season <p>Possible Focus – Retirement Planning, IRA Rollovers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">September</p> <p>Themes - Labor Day, Jewish New Year, Back to School</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Client Advocacy Short Course • Web Class: How to Make Your Client Profiles Count <p>Possible Focus – College Planning and Financial Aid</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;">April</p> <p>Themes - April 15th Tax Deadline, Jewish Passover</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping Your Clients Avoid Costly Mistakes • Web Class - A Simple Client Communication Strategy <p>Possible Focus – Tax Favored Investing, 401(k) Investment Choices</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">October</p> <p>Themes - Halloween, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving (Canada), Yom Kippur, DST ends</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End Tax Planning Campaign for Clients and Prospects • Is it time to update your definition of an Ideal Client? <p>Possible Focus - Charitable Giving, Family Gifting</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">May</p> <p>Themes - Memorial Day, Victoria Day, Mother's Day, Cinco de Mayo</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to Your Clients' Summer Reading List • How to Reconnect with Lost Clients <p>Possible Focus – Estate Planning, Wealth Management</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">November</p> <p>Themes – Election Day, Thanksgiving (US), Veterans Day, Remembrance Day</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Time to Say Thanks • 7 Tips for Making Your Client and Prospect Meetings More Meaningful <p>Possible Focus - General Financial Planning, Wealth Management</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">June</p> <p>Themes – Summer, Father's Day</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimate Client (and Prospect) Experience: Give Your Business a Boost by Updating Your Profiles • 5 Discussion Starters: Do your clients want to harvest their gains? <p>Possible Focus – Long Term Care, Health and Disability Insurance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">December</p> <p>Themes – Christmas, Hanukkah, Boxing Day</p> <p>EncoreAdvisor.com:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Encores Campaign: Wowing Your New Clients • How to Simplify Your Holiday Greeting Cards • How to Easily Build Handwritten Notes into Your Ongoing Client Care Routines <p>Possible Focus – Asset Allocation, Tax Planning, Goal Setting</p>

Appendix I – Planning Your Ideal Day

Step 1 – Define what's important

*"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one." - **Mark Twain***

Before you list your key activities, consider for a few minutes those things that are most important to you both personally and professionally. Several ideas are listed in the boxes below. Record your thoughts in the space at the bottom of this page or on a separate piece of paper.

What are you trying to accomplish professionally?

- S Revenues: Commissions/Fees/Combination
- S New Accounts
- S Target Clients
- S Assets Under Management
- S Client service
- S Professional development
- S Certifications – ongoing learning

What are you trying to accomplish personally?

- S Time with family
- S Personal time
- S Exercise and fitness
- S Community involvement
- S Church time
- S Vacations and long weekends
- S Hobbies

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Step 3: Develop Your Model Week

Establish a Baseline

Use the example below to begin creating your own model week. Start by inserting your key activities from the previous section. **A blank calendar can be found at the end of this exercise.**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM					
9:00 AM	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	
10:00 AM	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	
11:00 AM					
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	
2:00 PM	Prospect appointment		Prospect appointment		
3:00 PM		Prospect appointment		Prospect appointment	
4:00 PM	Leave early		Leave Early		
5:00 PM					

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Don't Forget the Details

Now, add in those “details that support your baseline. Returning calls and emails, preparing for appointments...

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM					
9:00 AM	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	
10:00 AM	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	
11:00 AM	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	
2:00 PM	Prospect appointment		Prospect appointment		
3:00 PM	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	
4:00 PM	Leave early	Return calls and emails	Leave Early	Return calls and emails	
5:00 PM					

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Schedule time for business development

Next, build in time for business development – the business side of your practice. Schedule and keep appointments with yourself and your team. Consider these categories: team meetings, research, important reading, new campaigns, unusual scheduling, brainstorming and writing (letters and newsletters).

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM					
9:00 AM	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
10:00 AM	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
11:00 AM	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
12:00 PM	Biz Dev: Team Lunch				
1:00 PM	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Return calls and emails
2:00 PM	Prospect appointment		Prospect appointment		
3:00 PM	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	
4:00 PM	Leave early	Return calls and emails	Leave Early	Return calls and emails	

Notes:

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Plan Daily

Finally, build in time each day for planning. This could be as little as 15 minutes. The best times for this activity are either first thing in the morning or before you leave the office each day.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM	Daily Planning				
9:00 AM	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Telephone Clients (5)	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
10:00 AM	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Telephone Prospects (5)	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
11:00 AM	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Appointment Prep	Biz Dev: Planning and Research
12:00 PM	Biz Dev: Team Lunch				
1:00 PM	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Client appointment	Return calls and emails
2:00 PM	Prospect appointment		Prospect appointment		
3:00 PM	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	Return calls and emails	Prospect appointment	
4:00 PM	Leave early	Return calls and emails	Leave Early	Return calls and emails	

Notes:



Blank Calendar

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM					
9:00 AM					
10:00 AM					
11:00 AM					
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM					
2:00 PM					
3:00 PM					
4:00 PM					
5:00 PM					

Appendix J - Create Your Simplicity Pledge

Sample Simplicity Pledge:

"From this point forward, I resolve to make my business life less complicated! I commit to a 5 hour work day. I will call all my "A" clients during the first 2 weeks of each month. I have put my assistant in charge of scheduling. I obtain the majority of my new clients through referrals. I discard all newspapers, magazines and research reports that I don't read the same week I receive them."

Directions:

In the space provided below, answer each of the 5 Simplicity Pledge questions we reviewed in Step 12. Once you have answered these questions, convert your answers into a brief pledge of your own. You may also choose to use the sample above as a baseline for your own strategy.

Step1: Answer these 5 questions in brief sentences or bullet points:

1. How do you define **WORK**?
2. What can you do to be sure you **put your clients first**?
3. How will you **control your scheduling**?
4. What should you do to **stop wasted prospecting**?
5. Which of your **time distractions should you eliminate**?

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