

Know Your Client with FORM

WHY is this important?

What you know about financial products and services is important; however, it takes a back seat to the knowledge of how it relates to your clients. Clients need to trust people they do business with. By establishing this trust, you are building the foundation for a solid banking relationship.

Take Care of Your Clients

The best business people know that client relationships are the engines that drive their businesses. Knowing the difference between what your clients expect and what they value and acting upon that difference is essential. Clients expect prompt call backs and polite staff. Every one of these items is covered in Business 101. Clients also value exceptional service, and top professionals make a point of providing service that their *clients* value.

One way you can begin to take care of your clients is by profiling each of them within the top 20% of your area of responsibility. Why the top twenty percent? To revisit the Pareto Principle, it's the top 20% of your clients who make up 80% of the revenues. By knowing about their families, careers and interests you can provide them with more personalized service.

WHO is this proven strategy designed for?

For those who want to create or further enhance long-lasting relationships with their clients based on trust and rapport – thereby competitor-proofing them and cultivating an environment of advocacy through the delivery of highly personalized service – with this elite group.

WHAT should you expect?

You will:

- Begin to gather FORM information about each of your high value clients: Family, Occupation, Recreation and Money
- Use this information to provide customized attention and exceptional service that exceeds the expectations of your high value clients
- Begin to create advocates by being more responsive to clients' needs
- Refer to “What You Can Expect from this Best Practice” on the following page for more

What You Can Expect from this Best Practice

PURPOSE

- To increase your awareness of the lifestyles and interests of your high value clients using the FORM concept
- To enable you to better serve these clients by understanding their needs, desires and goals
- To gain, store and use knowledge about your high value clients that your competitors do not have
- To continue the shift to client-focused relationships and creating the 'wow' factor
- To get more enjoyment and sense of fulfillment from your role

EXPECTED RESULTS

You will:

- Begin to gather FORM information about each of your high value clients: Family, Occupation, Recreation and Money
- Use this information to provide customized attention and exceptional service that exceeds the expectations of your high value clients
- Respond better to your clients' specific interests and circumstances once you have compiled all the relevant information on them
- Begin to create advocates by being more responsive to clients' needs

ACCOUNTABILITY

You (and your assistant) will:

- Begin building a FORM profile for each of your high value clients
- Use technology to store the FORM profile so it can be used in a meaningful way to create an exceptional client experience
- Commit to creating 'wow' moments for your high value clients based on FORM
- Continually update and add to your clients' FORM profile

Know Your Clients. Show Your Clients. Grow Your Clients.

You provide knowledge-based financial and/or banking solutions to your clients. However, have you ever considered what your most valuable intellectual property is? What might surprise you and many others is that your financial acumen is not at the top of the list. What you know about money is important; however, it takes a back seat to what you know about your clients.

Clients do not care how much you know, until they know how much you care.

When you take the time to complete extremely thorough profiles of your clients and when you efficiently archive these, you can offer your current clients better service and attract more – better quality – prospective clients.

Know Your Clients

In recent years, it has become an industry standard to 'Know Your Client.' Often, financial professionals will review their clients' previous year's income tax returns and may ask for a copy of their clients' wills. This type of financial reconnaissance is a great start, but to really know your clients, you need to learn about more than just their financial situation. So, what else should you ask that will "help you help your clients" more effectively and efficiently?



The FORM acronym (Family, Occupation, Recreation, and Money) describes the main categories you should be familiar with for each of your high value clients. It's no accident that 'Money' is last on the list – knowing about your clients' money is a given in your line of work. What is not always a given is that, in addition to asking for every detail about your clients' financial affairs, you should really aspire to glean as much information as possible from your clients about their family, their occupation and their recreation.

Why does this information matter? Simple: because it sets you apart from other financial professionals. Most clients are with you because they like you, not just because you may have done something spectacular with their money. They especially like you when you show an interest in their lives. The details you know about your clients are the ties that bind. This is very consistent with most clients who use Credit Unions as their primary banking relationship. Rarely are Credit Unions the leader in either pricing or technology: relationship banking is the value proposition.

When you then blend this kind of non-financial information with a highly professional approach, your clients will start to feel like they are part of an exclusive club. Without this proprietary non-financial information, your competitors can only talk shop with your clients. The non-financial information that you know about your clients is one of the main things that keep your competitors at bay.

Your interest will also encourage clients to place all their assets under your management as well as, to bring other banking and credit needs your way. In most cases, when clients have their financial

business spread amongst two or more financial professionals, it is because nobody has been proven to be superior to the others. How do you change that perception? How do you and this organization become your clients' only financial services solution?

- The knowledge you have of your clients' Family, Occupation, Recreation and Money.

If your clients have assets held and conduct banking and credit business elsewhere -- you should have the names and phone numbers of these providers. Imagine how much more effective you could be in eventually securing 100% of your clients' assets with all this information at your fingertips.

You can use the FORM concept (Family, Occupation, Recreation, and Money) as a guide for the types of questions to ask when communicating with your clients at review meetings or during relationship calls. For example, you should learn the names of your clients' children, regardless of their age and dependency. After all, these next generations are the heirs and perhaps should be treated as clients sooner rather than later. Record every detail of your clients' lives, from their culinary preferences to the name of their family pet. If you already know the answers to some of the FORM questions for a specific client, document them. And remember, all individuals servicing your client can and should also begin gathering FORM.

Gathering FORM information should stem out of natural conversation – never scripted. However, if, at any time, your clients wonder why you need this non-financial information, you can say:

It's my goal to bring you exceptional service and it helps me greatly when I know precisely what it is you value.

Show Your Clients

Once you have collected the FORM information, you need to store the information so you can use it to offer your clients the type of service that will set you apart. By recording detailed client information, you and others who support you can be consistent and well-informed whenever you deal with clients. Imagine how much more responsive and caring we can be with real-time sophisticated data on every high value client.

Grow Your Clients

By providing high-quality, personalized service based on the knowledge you have of your clients' lives, you can create long-lasting relationships based on trust and you can turn your best clients into advocates. Your clients will be so happy with this attention to detail that they tend to talk about it with their inner circle of friends, family and associates when the subject of money arises. These people will compare the great service you offer with the level of attention they are currently receiving, and they may get the nagging feeling that they are receiving sub-par service from an inferior, financial professional. Eventually, they will ask to be introduced to you. This phenomenon is a great example of referability, client service and client acquisition working in concert.

When you know about clients' families, occupations, recreation and money, you can offer your clients personalized service and build long-term relationships based on trust. In the process, you will turn your best clients into fans who will ensure that your business grows.

Taking Care of Business Everyday

Clients need to trust people they do business with. Taking care of your business is taking care of your clients.

Take Care of Your Clients

The best organizations know that client relationships are the engines that drive their growth. Knowing the difference between what your clients expect and what they value, and acting upon that difference is essential. Clients expect prompt call backs and polite staff. Every one of these items is covered in Business 101. Clients value exceptional service and top professionals make a point of providing client valued service. They target niche markets and make themselves the go-to person in that niche. There are several ways you can take care of your clients and in turn, the organization.

Profile Your Clients

Start by profiling every single client within the top 20% of your business – your AAA and AA clients. Why the top twenty percent? To revisit the Pareto Principle, it's the top 20% of your clients who make up the 80% of your revenues. Record every single fact you learn about your clients':



Family
Occupation
Recreation
Money

There are three reasons for doing this.

- First, you don't want your current business going anywhere. Knowing your clients allows you to provide personalized service and build relationships that will competitor-proof your favourite clients. Just think about why some high value clients have come to you in the past. Often it is a result of little or no contact or relationship with their previous advisor.
- Second, the reason for documenting client data is that, despite how good you might think you are at keeping this information in your head, until it's written down, it isn't equity. By recording FORM information, you and every other representative at the organization can leverage it to provide exceptional service.
- Third, profiling your clients identifies niche markets. These special groups might consist of business owners, retirees, chiropractors or dairy farmers. The discoveries made are often surprising. Such niche markets are often a great source of potential ideal clients.

The spin-offs you will enjoy from this information are exponential. FORM information also makes phone calls to your clients easier, making these interactions more meaningful. You ultimately uncover more about your clients, all of which gets fed right back into their profiles.

HELPFUL TIPS TO IMPLEMENT FORM

The FORM process involves gathering, storing and using information about your high value clients regarding their Family, Occupation, Recreation and Money (FORM) to solidify and competitor-proof the relationship with them.

Tips on How to Begin the FORM Process

The implementation for the FORM process is as follows:

- Print a FORM Gathering Template for every A level client (AAA, AA, A) you have and write the name of each A level client at the top. They are to put these in a holder labeled FORM. Alternately, you can complete this online in the FORM feature of your CRM. Choose the process that will work best for you.
- You need to decide on a reasonable deadline for having FORM started for each of your A level clients. The time-frame you've chosen and the number of clients you have in your A level groups will determine how many you need to complete each week.

You should have no trouble completing at least one or two client FORM profiles per week without adversely affecting your capacity. Remember: this is just a starting point.

- If you have an Assistant, add FORM to your weekly Team Meeting Agenda to keep this new project top of mind for everyone. With a heightened sense of awareness, you and your team are more likely to continue to practice collecting and using FORM. The FORM coordinator will address this item on the Agenda.
- For each existing A level client (AAA, AA, A) you need to complete as much as possible on the FORM Gathering Template. Or, you may add this information directly to the FORM feature of your CRM – if this is your chosen approach.
- Next, you may want to review client files for notes to captures important FORM details captured during previous meetings and/or calls.
- Finally, any others who assist you in servicing your clients should review the FORM Gathering Template and add to the FORM information based on their knowledge of the client.

If you have a multiple-member servicing team, everyone on the team needs to review the FORM information to ensure you capture as much initial FORM information possible. You may be surprised at the level of information or possibly even the non-information captured by your staff.

If you are NOT able to satisfactorily complete this description for your high value clients, then you need to gather this information NOW. Gather information about lifestyle and interests during your review meetings, through your call rotations, events, and via your staff (who are often a great resource for information about your clients.)

Note: We NEVER recommend using a survey to collect FORM information because most of your high value clients will expect you to know this about them already. For your new clients, FORM information can easily be gathered during the first and second appointments.

Use Your Contact Management System to Store FORM

As you complete the **FORM Gathering Template** for each client, log their FORM information into your contact management system. This will ensure everyone can easily store, view, share and utilize the FORM information gathered. Do NOT bury this information in meeting notes and client history because it will not be used. The FORM information needs to be in an easy to access location on the contact management system.

Going forward everyone who services your clients' needs to be attentive to continue to gather and communicate new FORM information about all your high value clients.

This means every time a client interaction takes place:

- You use the FORM information to establish rapport; and
- You genuinely gather additional FORM information.

Your Annual FORM Review

Take the time once a year to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the data and prepare a demographic overview of your client-base. You will use this information to deliver customized client service packages and to decide how to market your practice.

Don't just Collect FORM, Use It

Use FORM to ensure communication with your clients is purposeful and meaningful to them. This includes several elements of your Advocate Service, including moments of truth, call rotations, articles of interest, events, etc. These are the activities that allow you to create the 'rave' factor with your best clients. We will talk about this in detail in the next strategy.

Ultimately, you will quickly observe how using FORM based information is an important building block in establishing enduring relationships with your high value clients.

Responding to Moments of Truth – True Stories

Making client phone calls are an inexpensive and powerful client service strategy. By calling clients, you convey to them your proactive approach and demonstrate your sincere interest. If you keep meticulous notes of these conversations, you can build huge dossiers which remind you what matters in your clients' lives (FORM). These dossiers will never leave you stranded for things to talk about. In fact, when you are talking about things that are truly important and interesting to your clients, you enhance your level of trust and rapport with them. These are exactly the kinds of qualities that help evolve clients to become Ideal Clients.

Client Information Must Be Chronicled to make it an Asset

Far too many professionals rely on their memories to store these client details. Although this is quite functional for some, the information you learn about your clients is not really an asset until the details are documented. And make no mistake, this information is proprietary. By documenting the information in an easily accessible database, nothing slips through the cracks. You can invest every conversation into the next, and it ensures that the entire team has access to up-to-date details that allow them to provide consistent and personalized service.

Recognizing and Responding to Moments of Truth

Gathering personal information is important, however, it is equally important to note misfortunes or milestones that are occurring in your clients' lives. Becoming exceptional at the art of demonstrating to your clients that "yes, you are paying attention", can be extremely powerful in the development of your relationship. By identifying and responding to "moments of truth" is one way to show that you are paying attention. Moments of truth are those times when people are experiencing significant changes, challenges or celebrations – anything that is important in your clients' lives.

Here is one real-life example to demonstrate the value of recognizing these moments of truth.

A Financial Planner had a gentleman client who was a golf fanatic. Sadly, the client became ill and for the last four months of his life, he was confined to the house. He became incredibly frustrated at this change in his lifestyle.

Take a minute and think how you would respond to this situation. Would you have the necessary information about this client to respond in a precise and meaningful way? Is the information documented so that in the event of your absence, your staff could respond to these situations? This client's Financial Planner had detailed information about him and offered honest, caring support during this difficult period.

When the Financial Planner learned that their golf-loving client was housebound, he purchased a handheld golf game and had it sent by courier to his client's house. The client was so tickled by their thoughtfulness that he remarked to his wife: "It made my day". After the client passed away, his wife made a point of telling the Financial Planner that he adored that golf game, and played it incessantly; the game proved to be the perfect distraction. The wife also made sure that the Financial Planner knew her husband had told her to put her complete trust in them, because he was sure she would be well looked after.

Another financial professional, had recently acquired a new client who was getting ready for a six-week trip to New Zealand. The financial professional's coach asked him what he was doing about that; there was a long uncomfortable silence on the end of the line. The coach enthusiastically jumped in and advised him to seize this opportunity to do the unexpected and "wow" his new client. It was specifically recommended he send his new client a nice "Bon Voyage" card along with a travel book on New Zealand.

The following week, the financial professional could not wait to tell his coach about what had happened -he had couriered the book and card to the client. Almost immediately he received a call from his new client thanking him for the thoughtful gesture and telling him how he looked forward to reading the book. All the while, the financial professional could hear the wife of the client in the background – talking excitedly about the book and their fabulous upcoming trip. So, will the book get read? You bet. Just think about the amount of time you spend in the airport and on the airplane – especially on a trip to New Zealand. It wouldn't be surprising if they read it cover to cover – both he and his wife.

The moral here is this:

It's easy to get fooled into thinking this isn't the important stuff; when in fact it is.

Taking it to the Next Level

You are already well-practiced in the process of making regular calls to your clients. You are also familiar with the process of capturing personal (FORM) information you learn during these discussions and documenting it where you and others on your team can have access to it. By all accounts, that is two significant steps in the right direction.

Now, to take these calls to the next level and deliver maximum client impact, you need to actively look for opportunities to overwhelm your best clients. You can begin by becoming familiar with the various types of Moments of Truth. This will provide you with a list of important life events you can keep on your radar when speaking with clients.

Loyalty Flows from Service

Once it is understood that loyalty flows from service, you have a chance to understand something even more valuable. The way to generate unexpected service to your best clients is to ask yourself (and them for that matter), what do they expect? Once you're clear on what your clients expect, you can then meet those expectations consistently.

After that, you can move on to the fun part and ask "What can I do now that my clients won't expect?" As I'm sure you've experienced, it's always the unexpected service that gets talked about, and it's always 'getting talked about' that increases your professional value.

TAKE ACTION & GET STARTED

All client interactions have some degree of FORM. Whether it is a new account opening or an investment renewal, there are always levels of chemistry and in many cases; it is this impression that primes our clients for a relationship based on trust.

The FORM Process

Use the steps below to begin cataloguing FORM for your clients. The sooner you begin this process, the more quickly you will see the results of this highly-personalized approach to providing client service—especially with your high value clients.

- **Understand what we are trying to capture by reviewing the *FORM Easy Reference Guide*.**
- **Print off and review the *FORM Gathering Template*.**
 - This will provide you with an idea of the type of information you are looking to gather on each of your high value clients.
- **Determine where on your contact management system you will store this information for each client.**
 - This will ensure everyone on the team can instantly access, use and update it.
- 3. **Begin to document the FORM information (Family, Occupation, Recreation and Money) for each of your high value clients starting, of course, with your AAAs.**
 - You may wish to do this in paper form for now and then move this to your CRM or you may prefer to do this directly in your CRM.
- 4. **If you are unable to develop a comprehensive FORM profile, for each client in the AAA, AA, A groups you need to complete FORM Program below.**
 - This program will allow you to accurately gather information about the lifestyles and interests of your clients.
- 5. **Every time a client interaction takes place, use FORM information to establish rapport with your high value clients.**
 - You and everyone on your team should review FORM information prior to EVERY high value client interaction, whether it is a meeting, event or telephone call.
- 6. **FORM is an ongoing process.**
 - Everyone on the team should continually update the FORM information by paying attention during all client interactions.
- 7. **Maximize Your CRM.**
 - You can also use the Completed Actions and Additional Information sections in the client profile on your contact management system as resources to invest every interaction in the next.

The FORM Program

The approach to gather FORM information about existing and new clients should always be conducted in a sincere and conversational way – that feels natural for you and the client.

Existing Clients

1. Beginning NOW. Every time someone on the team interacts with a client, they must gather FORM information and catalogue it in the FORM section of the contact management system. This may occur during a conversation over the phone, at an event or in person at the office.
2. The next time a client is in for a review appointment the advisor must take the opportunity to gather and catalogue FORM information.
3. Constantly review the FORM information to focus the conversation in a way to help you fill in the FORM gaps.

New Clients

1. During the First and Second Appointments, the advisor should gather and catalogue as much FORM information as possible.
 - This will be discussed in more detail in the “Client Onboarding” section.
2. Any interactions that a team client has with a new client as they go through the New Client Process are an opportunity to gather and catalogue FORM information.

FORM Easy Reference Guide

Here is an example of the type of FORM information that will help you create and maintain high levels of rapport and deliver personalized service to your high value clients.

<p>FAMILY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouse (who, how long, how they met, milestone anniversary) • Children (names, ages, interests, accomplishments) • Grandchildren (names, ages, interests, accomplishments) • Pets (how many, what type, names) • Health Issues or other Special Situations (related to client, spouse or their children)
<p>OCCUPATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupation (client and spouse, for how long, where) • Retirement (retired or retirement goal date - of client and spouse) • Business Owner (type, how long, long-term intentions, etc.) Note: → Introduce them to commercial services • Professional education and/or credentials • Professional successes and/or accomplishments
<p>RECREATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports and Recreation (play, coach, watch, fan) • Personal Interests (hobbies, volunteering) • Music (play it, listen to it, types) • Reading (favorite types of books, favorite authors, reading club) • Favorite Traditions (occasions, celebrations, reunions) • Travel (seasonal/annual, favorite place, cottage or vacation home, boat) • Charities and other causes supported (volunteer positions) • Service Clubs and Organizations (client or participant) • Alumni of (Universities, associations)
<p>MONEY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Financial Goals and Objectives (Short term/medium term/long term goals) • Primary Banking Information (Transactional Accounts, Credit Accounts, Mortgage Accounts) • Investment Strategies (Current savings accounts, FI and rates) • Retirement Strategies (Current retirement accounts, FI and rates) • Real Estate Assets (principal residence, vacation home, rental property, commercial property, other)

FORM Gathering Template



Choose one of your high value clients and begin documenting their FORM profile below.

CLIENT: _____

FAMILY:

Spouse/Partner (who, how long, how they met, milestone anniversary):

Children (names, ages, interests, accomplishments):

Grandchildren (names, ages, interests, accomplishments):

Pets (how many, what type, names):

Special Situations (related to client, spouse/partner or their children):

Other (specify):

OCCUPATION:

Current Occupation or retired (for how long, where else, accomplishments):

Previous Occupation (for how long, where):

Spouse's/Partner's Occupation (for how long, where):

Retirement (retired or retirement goals - of client and spouse/partner):

Business Owner (do they own any other type of business, how long, etc.):

Other (specify):

RECREATION:

Sports & Recreation (play, coach, watch, full-fledged fan):

Personal Interests (hobbies, volunteering):

Music (play it, listen to it, types):

Reading (favorite types of books, favorite authors, reading club):

Favorite Traditions (occasions, celebrations, reunions):

Travel (seasonal/annual, favorite place, cottage or vacation home, boat):

Charities and other causes supported (volunteer positions):

Service Clubs & Organizations (client or participant):

Alumnus of (Universities, associations):

Other (specify):

MONEY:

This information relates directly to the client financial situation and there are specific processes within the Proven Strategies Advantage program to deal with Money.

In creating this Client FORM profile, have you identified an opportunity for a Moment of Truth? If so, explain.
