

# Welcome Aboard!

## WHY is this important?

How you treat a new client after they've come on board presents another potential point of positive differentiation for you. That's right. A simple welcome process could make your clients feel appreciated, confident and very pleased with their decision to choose you as their new financial professional. It will build trust and rapport – instead of eroding it. In other words, their experience doesn't have to be anticlimactic or riddled with disappointment. Furthermore, if they are comparing this to their previous experience with other financial professionals, there is a good chance you can easily exceed their expectations. What a fantastic way to begin a new relationship. Can you imagine wanting to do it any other way?

Put yourself in their shoes for a minute...You agree to your new Financial Planner's recommendations, you sign the plethora of forms and then you don't know if you'll ever hear from the Financial Planner again. We are serious. For a period of anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks (perhaps even longer) your life savings is in limbo transferring from one institution to another. Then a couple months later you receive your first statement, which you may or may not understand. Perhaps you have some questions, but you are not sure who to call for what. Maybe you need to speak to the Financial Planner but you aren't sure when you'll hear from or see them again? Do you have to wait an entire year before you see this Financial Planner face-to-face again? Think about it. There are a lot of unknowns here before this new client is fully brought into the fold and gets to experience all aspects of your ongoing client service. But, what do you do in the meantime? That is the question.

Our simple new client welcome process can be easily implemented and doesn't take much time. Yet the payoff – is great. There is no question this is a good use of your time. If you have an Assistant, you can consider delegating some of the New Client Welcome steps. This allows you to leverage your Assistant's time and introduces your new clients to your assistant at an early stage in the relationship as a valuable client of the financial team. So, let's get started and get your new client welcome process underway.

## WHO is this proven strategy designed for?

For those who continue to want to exceed new client expectations.

## WHAT should you expect?

You will:

- Consistently deliver a welcome process that fits with your branding & professionalism
- Refer to "What You Can Expect from this Best Practice" on the next page for more

# What You Can Expect from this Best Practice

## PURPOSE

- To give your new clients a 'soft landing' ensuring they are not feeling underwhelmed as your relationship gets underway
- To reinforce they have made a well-informed decision about working with you
- To continue to increase trust in you, the organization and your approach
- To demonstrate your proactive approach to managing client relationships

## EXPECTED RESULTS

You will:

- Feel great knowing this new client has been fully brought into the fold with this simple welcome process, which delights (yet again) with the unexpected
- Provide a bridge of 'client-focused' activities to tide them over until the regularly occurring activities of the Client Service Program set in

Your clients will:

- Experience continued client servicing after they have given you their trust and confidence (ie. signed the paperwork)
- Know you are there for them and pro-actively managing the relationship
- Feel important and appreciated (instead of used and 'sold')

## ACCOUNTABILITY

You will:

- Create and deliver a welcome experience your clients will appreciate
- Involve others at the organization to ensure it is delivered flawlessly every time

Your clients will:

- Talk enthusiastically about what you do and how you do it – to anyone who will listen

## More about Welcome Gifts

For most Financial Planners, it's a big deal when you bring on a new client – especially if they possess many of the traits of your ideal client profile. Spirits are high, you are feeling great and everyone on the team is delighted. After all, that is what it's all about: growing by acquiring quality new relationships that bring value to you and the Credit Union/Organization. It may not be happening as often as you would like right now, but generally it is something everyone in your organization is accustomed to.

Now, for most clients, it's an even bigger deal to decide to leave their current Financial Planner and/or Financial Institution for a new one. To them, it's more than just signing new account applications and transfer forms. To them, it's about giving someone brand new complete control over their entire life savings. That's right: their life savings. Now that IS a big deal. Although you may have a couple of hundred accounts to manage, the only account that matters to your new client is THEIRS.



To maintain the client-focused approach we began, it is necessary to welcome them aboard the right way. That is why we developed the strategy called Welcome Aboard!

Now, most Financial Planners we work with launch the Welcome Aboard immediately and loved it. However, we did notice that from time to time, the “Welcome Gift” was not always being implemented immediately and consistently. As it turns out, some Financial Planners were a little stumped and undecided when it came to choosing their new client gift and therefore didn't include one.

We want to see you bring this Welcome Aboard full circle with maximum impact. So, we thought it would be beneficial to share a few tips to keep in mind when deciding on your new client gift so you could make that decision once and for all. Here are some things we consider when choosing a welcome gift:

1. Is of high quality and is congruent with the image you wish to convey and portray.
2. Has ‘shelf life’ – meaning that it will be around for a while and is not perishable. Perishable goods, although enjoyed, won't be around for the long haul.
3. Is remotely tied to the services you provide so there is a meaningful and intuitive association.
4. Has universal appeal and can be delivered to each new client. Consider your ideal client demographics.

We choose a gift for all the right reasons as listed above. Do not limit yourself with firm-branded or logo items available. Gifts without logos are equally (and often more) appreciated and enjoyed than those which are. They will always remember who sent them a valued gift.

**Special Note:** CUSO will provide you with an initial supply of Welcome Gifts along with a re-order process.

## **Consistency, Consistency, Consistency**

It all comes down to consistency. This means it's important that your new client gift be the same for all new clients and here's why. Let's say for example, your new client gift is a high quality organizational binder that allows clients to store their account documentation. Now, your existing client 'Bob' (who just last year went through your new client process) has the opportunity to recommend a friend 'Larry' to you. After careful consideration and a positive outcome for the fit process, Larry goes through each of the steps in how you bring on a new client. Finally, you reach the final phase the Welcome Aboard! Instead of sending Larry the binder, you send him a stainless-steel coffee mug or a set of golf balls - whatever. What you may not be aware of is that Larry may, in fact, be expecting and looking forward to the binder ~ that Bob already raved to him about.

A couple of things happen in this scenario (and none of them are good for you the Financial Planner):

- First, your new client Larry is certainly not 'pleased and surprised', but instead is disappointed with his new client gift. Next, Larry questions what else in your service delivery (as described to him by his friend Bob) he might not receive. This absolutely undermines your consistency and credibility. At this point, you need to ask yourself how comfortable is Larry about introducing you to others?
- It's not over yet. Larry runs into Bob and tells him about his disappointment with your process. Bob is scratching his head over the coffee mug (or golf balls) and wondering what else won't be delivered as he described to Larry. This is obviously not good because now Bob (a previous source of quality introductions) is now questioning your consistency and credibility. At this point, you must ask yourself will Bob ever recommend you again.

## **Don't Forget**

It's important to remember the Welcome Gift is specifically designed for the 'ideal' clients you bring on. It is important that your time, energy and resources are being devoted to those clients who are bringing value to your practice.

# TAKE ACTION & GET STARTED

Start your new client relationship off on the right foot by carrying out the three-step Welcome Aboard! This process will demonstrate your integrity, professionalism and consistency, which of course builds up your credibility and trustworthiness.

## 1. Send the New Client Welcome Card (and Gift).

- Once you have successfully conducted the Implementation phase, send a New Client Welcome Card.
- This card is sent the day of or after Implementation.
- Personalize this card to maximize its impact.
  - Ensure you personalize this card by handwriting your message and the envelope.
  - Once you have done so, it is important for you to use a stamp rather than running this card through the postage machine. This is an important feature of this Welcome Card.
  - When people receive their mail, they tend to sort through and place important items aside. Mail that has been sent with handwriting on the envelope and a stamp tend to stand out.
- This card signals the beginning of a new personal relationship.
- Refer to [Step 12\\_New Client Welcome Card](#).
- Note: When bringing on a new client who qualifies in your top or ideal profile, we recommend you include a small welcome gift.
  - Refer to [Step 12\\_More about Welcome Gifts](#).

## 2. The First Statement and Service Call.

- You will cap of this process by making the First Statement and Service Call. This call occurs around the time you expect your client to have received their first statement (approximately 4 to 6 weeks).
- Refer to [Step 13\\_First Statement and Service Call Script](#).
  - If the new clients are not home, you can simply leave a voice message. The client will call back if they have questions. Otherwise, they will know that you are thinking about them and appreciate the call.
- You may choose to have your Assistant conduct this phone call.
  - This will allow your Assistant to introduce themselves to your new client as well as, walk them through the process of how to read a statement (which is often difficult for new clients).

Deliver a consistent welcome process. In no time at all, you will breathe a sigh of relief knowing the Welcome Aboard is part of your ongoing routine for bringing on new clients in a professional and consistent manner.

## Remember to:

- Refer to [The Welcome Aboard](#) steps on the [New Client Checklist](#).
- Ensure that each step is implemented at the appropriate point in the process.
- Consistently use every aspect of the process with all new clients.

# New Client Welcome Card (and Gift)

## Client Onboarding STEP 12

Use the following as a sample script to welcome your new clients as well as, express your gratitude for their trust and confidence in you.

Instructions:

- Send the New Client Welcome Card immediately following the Implementation Meeting.
- Use a quality card.
- Ensure you handwrite your New Client Welcome Card scripting and their address envelope.
- Use a stamp and do not use the postage meter.

NOTE: If this individual qualifies as one of your top (ideal) clients, we recommend you include a welcome gift along with the card.

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*Dear [New Client],*

*I wanted to let you know how much I have enjoyed our meetings.*

*I look forward to developing our long-term relationship and I appreciate your trust and confidence.*

*Feel free to call anytime.*

*Sincerely,*

*[Signature of Financial Professional]*

# First Statement & Service Call Script

## Client Onboarding STEP 13

Use the following telephone script as a guide to assist you with the First Statement & Service Call with new clients. Refer to the following page for a Voice Message Script.

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- May I speak with [New Client Name] please?
- This is [Your Name] calling from [Credit Union/Organization].
- I'm calling to ensure that you have received your first statement and would like to take a moment to review it with you.
- Do you have 5 minutes right now? Great, I'll give you a minute to go and get your statement so we can walk through it together.
  - ***If no, rebook for a fixed time in the next 5 business days.***
- Begin to walk through key statement features:
  - Feature 1
  - Feature 2
  - Feature 3
- Do you have any other questions or concerns regarding how to read your statement?
  - ***If yes, answer questions accordingly.***
  - ***If no, proceed to end call.***
- **Also, discuss any other important items like going paperless options, etc.**
- Do you have any other questions or concerns that I can address?
  - ***If yes, answer questions accordingly.***
  - ***If no, proceed to end call.***
- Thank you for your time today [Client Name].
- If there is anything we can help you with, feel free to call anytime.
- It was nice speaking with you – have a great day.
- Good-bye.

## Voice Message Script

Use the following telephone script as a guide to assist you if the new client's answering machine picks up.

Due to privacy restrictions, you may be unable to leave detailed information on our client's voice mail.

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- Hello [Client Name], this is [Your Name] calling from [Credit Union/Organization].
- I would like to take a few minutes to review some documentation you may have recently received and answer any questions you might have.
- Feel free to contact me at [your phone number].
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- Thank you and have a good day.