

The Pre-Appointment Process

WHY is this important?

It takes only seconds to form a first impression about someone and in many cases, these impressions are ever-lasting. Simply put: they can make or break a new relationship. Most of us can easily recall times when a service provider or professional has fallen short of our expectations and ultimately disappointed us. This is not the road to introductions.

When it comes to thinking about service providers or professionals who have exceeded our expectations and pleasantly surprised us, most of us have to dig deep. For those of us fortunate enough to experience this service euphoria, we often feel compelled to share this joyous news of outstanding service with anyone and everyone who will listen. Now, that IS a recipe for success!

There is no question that you begin to create a first impression from the initial point of contact with a potential new client. Every move thereafter is being evaluated and assessed. You are being measured up.

In this strategy, you will learn a simple yet effective pre-appointment process that will help you organize and manage the first impression you make with a new client. The power of this process combined with the strength of a client introduction means potential new clients may know they want to work with you even before they meet you face-to-face.

WHO is this proven strategy designed for?

For those who want to create a unique and professional first impression with a prospective new client, which attracts them to you.

WHAT should you expect?

You will:

- Make a professional first impression on a potential client
- Be confident and in control leading the relationship with a pro-active approach
- Have prospects better understand what you do and who you are best suited to work with
- Set the stage for fit.
- Have your prospects tell you AND OTHERS how impressed they are with this process
- 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 have a new client participate in your New Client Process – an approach unlike anything they've experienced from most of your competitors
- To make initial contact with a potential new client that creates a great first impression even before you meet them in person
- To create an initial awareness about who you are, the Credit Union and what you do - to ensure the individuals who do come in to meet with you are the well suited to your area of expertise

EXPECTED RESULTS

You will:

- Make a professional first impression on a potential new client
- Be confident and in control leading the relationship with a pro-active approach
- Set the stage for FIT

Your prospects will:

- Appreciate the organized and professional New Client Process
- Better understand what you do and who you are best suited to work with
- Be unimpressed if they should ever meet with another Financial Professional who does not provide them with a pre-appointment process like yours

ACCOUNTABILITY

You will:

- Ensure each of the 4 pre-appointment steps are implemented
- Delegate steps where appropriate to ensure consistently

Your clients will:

- Tell you AND OTHERS how impressed they are with this process

Make a Great First Impression & Differentiate Your Branding

When it comes to potential new clients, the first impression we make is the one that counts. Like everything else in life, if our first impression isn't a good one, it may be the last one. And, if you are like most people, you've had an experience where you were genuinely concerned by the lack of service, process and professionalism that you could barely believe it. You may have even told others about your negative experience – a cautionary tale to others to 'stay away'. Years ago, this might have made for interesting water cooler talk. Now, with the unlimited reach of the internet, it can easily become blogged, tweeted and posted on numerous social media sites – this is our new reality. Imagine on the other hand when your service expectations are exceeded, and you are equally excited to share your story with friends and family - in person or online.

You have the opportunity right now to consciously break free from the typical and mediocre approach Financial Professionals follow when they meet someone – which is typically have a phone conversation and book an appointment. Yes, this approach is fine *if* you want to swim in the pool of sameness as everyone else, but if you want something that sets you apart and provides enhanced branding you need to do things differently.



By taking the time to allow your prospect to experience a structured, professional and client-focused set of communications leading up to your first meeting you are in a unique opportunity to build trust. Even better, this type of approach helps identify and attract candidates that are well suited for your services – yes, your ideal clients.

Our simple Pre-Appointment process will help you properly set the stage for the first appointment and create a very good first impression. It creates a distinct impression that you are process-driven, client-focused and successful at what you do (scarcity). And think about this for a moment: if you implement this process as we outline it you will have made multiple points of meaningful contact with your prospective new client over about a 1-week period, which in many cases is more than they've heard from their current Financial Professional over the past year.

TAKE ACTION & GET STARTED

The following sequence of pre-meeting activities will position you as professional: process-driven and client-focused. Now let's review the Pre-Appointment steps.

Once you have received an introduction from one of your existing clients, you need to begin planning the first impression you are about to create. In this section, we will review how you can create a professional and positive impression on your potential new client.

1. **Send a Thank You card to the existing client who made the introduction.**
 - Refer to the *Step 1_Thank You for Introduction Card Sample* as a guideline for your Thank You card content.
 - Use quality cards and always hand-write your Thank You Card. You will also want to be sure you hand-write the envelope and use a postage stamp when sending the card.
2. **Call the potential new client.**
 - Make initial contact by phone with the potential new client to briefly introduce yourself and to outline the next step in the process for new clients.
 - Refer to *Step 2_Initial Contact Script*.
3. **Send an email confirmation outlining the date, time, and place of the meeting.**
 - Be sure to include helpful information regarding location and availability of parking.
 - Refer to *Step 3 Email Confirmation*.
4. **Call two days in advance of the scheduled meeting to confirm.**
 - Refer to *Step 4_FIT Meeting Confirmation Call Script*.
5. **Be ready to provide your Introduction Kit at the 1st Appointment.**
 - CUSO will help you create your Introduction Kit.
 - All Introduction Kits must follow marketing standards prior to use and be suitably branded.

Remember to:

- Refer to **Pre-Appointment** 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 potential new clients.

Thank You for Introduction Card Sample

Client Onboarding STEP 1

Use the following as a sample script to show your existing clients gratitude for their trust in you, in addition to their introduction.

Dear [Client/Center of Influence/Other],

I want to thank you for recently introducing me to [name of individual introduced].

I genuinely appreciate your continued trust and confidence.

As always, I look forward to continuing to help those important to you.

Sincerely,

MFIS's Signature



Initial Contact Script for MFIS

Client Onboarding STEP 2

Use the following telephone script as a guide to assist you with making initial contact.

- May I speak with [Potential New Client] please?
- Thank you, [Potential New Client]. This is [your name] calling from [Credit Union/Organization].
- The reason I am calling is that [Referrer Name] told us that you would be interested in learning more about how our services could help you.
- At [Credit Union/Organization] we have a process we follow when bringing on new clients to ensure everyone is on the same page with respect to what you need and what we can provide.
- The first thing is for us to set up an introductory meeting where we both meet and learn about each other and I can find out more about what you are specifically looking for.
- This introductory meeting ranges from 30 to 60 minutes depending on the situation and sometimes we are able to help you with whatever you need right then and there, and other times an additional meeting is required.
- It would be helpful if you could give me an idea of why you are coming in so I can start thinking about how I can help you. Could you tell me a little more about that now?
- Okay great – thank you for sharing. That is very helpful to me.
 - *Ask additional questions if required to clarify the situation so you feel you can adequately prepare*
- I would also like to add that during our first meeting, it's important we both establish there is a good fit – that means you believe we can provide the advice and solutions you are looking for regarding [insert their situation here] and we believe we can truly help you and genuinely add value.
- I want to stress that we don't expect any decisions to be made at this first meeting.
- These types of decisions are important, so we want it to be relaxed and informed, not rushed.
- Let's go ahead and find a day and time that works for both of us.
 - *Establish a mutually agreeable time to meet – typically 2-4 days out.*
- Great we have our meeting set for [day] at [time].
- Thank you for your time today [Potential New Client].
- I look forward to meeting you.

FIT Meeting Confirmation Email

Client Onboarding STEP 3

Dear [Potential New Client],

I enjoyed speaking with you today and look forward to meeting you.

I wish to confirm our upcoming appointment:

Date:

Time:

Address:

As discussed, during our initial meeting we will discuss your initial needs and my approach to helping you. The purpose of this meeting is for us each to determine the best way to proceed based on what we discuss during this meeting. Our experience is that this is the foundation of a good long-term relationship.

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

[Name]
MFIS
[Organization]

P.S. For your convenience, I have attached a map showing you where our office is located. Client parking is located [describe suitable parking facilities].

FIT Meeting Confirmation Call Script

Client Onboarding STEP 4

Use the following telephone script as a guide to assist you with confirming the FIT Meeting.

- May I please speak with [Potential New Client] please?
- This is [Your Name] calling from [Organization].
- I'm calling to confirm your appointment at [time], on [date].
- Do you have any questions about where our office is located or the availability of parking in the area?
Answer questions appropriately.
- Thank you [Potential New Client].
- I look forward to meeting you.

Your Introduction Kit

The Introduction Kit is a key part of how you educate your prospects in the first meeting, as well as existing clients and strategic alliances. The contents of your Introduction Kit would be the same for each of these target audiences – the only thing that would change is the “Cover Letter” accompanying the kit to ensure it is appropriately referenced and framed. This best practice includes the “Prospective Client Letter” because it is used with New Client Process. The “Existing Client Letter” will be covered in Pillar 3 of the program.

Branding

Your Introduction Kit should be consistent with all other marketing materials you have, including your website (if you have one). Pay careful attention to branding, formatting, and language. Everything should look like it fits together and the content must be consistent.

The CUSO Team

The CUSO Team will assist with the development of your Introduction Kit, which must also be approved by marketing/compliance prior to use with your clients.

What follows is a list of some essential components for an effective Introduction Kit that will pique the interest of your ideal prospects. These core pieces would be accompanied by a cover letter introducing them to your kit.

1. Credit Union Description

Potential clients will want to learn more about the Credit Union and begin to understand you and any other individuals at the Credit Union they may encounter during the financial and/or banking process. As such, you need to provide them with a brief overview about the Credit Union and the resources they have access to as a client (ie. they various types of expertise – not a list of products).

This piece is intended to establish credibility as well as, fully position the scope of services and solutions available at the Credit Union/Organization.

2. Our Financial Planning Approach

You should include a general description of your approach to providing financial solutions and how these solutions benefit your clients. You want to outline your well-defined and client-focused approach. And you want to do it in simple terms and emphasize the partnership approach. You may also wish to describe the sort of person who would most benefit from the specific solutions you provide – paint a picture. Make what you do interesting and at the same time, showcase your integrity.

This aspect of the Introduction Kit plays a key role in showcasing the process-focus of your approach versus the traditional product-focus of the competition.

3. Your Biography

This piece is a ‘first impression’ piece for you personally. It needs to be one-page, professionally presented and interesting.

Be sure to include a photo of yourself so clients know who they are meeting the first time they come into your office. You’ll also want to include your experience and credentials – which is standard on biographies. In addition, be sure to include a paragraph describing who you are personally. This would include things that you are comfortable sharing about yourself about your interests, hobbies and passions. It may also include your involvement in other service organizations or clubs.

4. The Organization’s Wealth Team

This piece reinforces the concept of the wealth continuum available at the organization as well as, the importance of collaborating with other related professionals to ensure full coordination of your financial affairs. Some of these professionals may be in direct association with the Credit Union and others may not be.

5. Our Partnership Approach

This piece positions your expectations of your clients as well as, what these clients can expect from you. It defines the criteria for a successful long-term partnership with your clients.

What NOT to Include

Do not include sales material and/or product brochures in your Introduction Kit. If you lead with product, you are following the Sales Model and are on the road to gaining a customer. If you lead with process and people, you are following the Professional Model and are on the road to attracting a client – who will become an advocate. Avoid the temptation to ‘tuck in’ the readily available product pamphlets – this is where *less is more*.

Special Notes

We do not recommend sending out an Introduction Kit unless someone has given you expressed permission to do so (ie. we don’t rapid fire this out unsolicited). This information is intended for those who have expressed an interest in knowing more about your practice. In other words, they want to know more about you, your team and your approach.