

# Financial Advisor Client Communication: Strategies for Financial Services

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## Key Takeaways

**Consistency matters.** Clients value predictable, clear communication — especially in volatile markets.

**Listening is the edge.** Better questions and real listening drive improving client outcomes.

**Personalization builds trust.** Tailor communication style to each client's preferences and personality.

**Simplicity and responsiveness win.** Clear and efficient follow-through signal competence at an increasing rate.

If you've been in this business long enough, you've seen communication change dramatically. And in today's environment — where markets move fast and headlines move faster — how you manage communication is often just as important as what you're communicating. Evolving customer expectations are driving significant changes in communication approaches, pushing firms to adapt and innovate.

With all that is changing, one thing remains the same: consistent communication that is clear and confident and centers the client's experience is still the gold standard.

This isn't about sending more emails; clients want personalized engagement.

Let's break it down.

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## Communication Has Evolved – But Consistency Is Still the Gap

Over my three decades in this business, I've watched communication evolve in many ways. At one point, most interactions were face-to-face in an office. If you spoke on the phone, it was usually just to schedule that in-person meeting. That was the rhythm of the industry.

Then COVID accelerated online communication: Zoom. Teams. WebEx. Virtual reviews. Digital signatures. Remote onboarding. That evolution has been well documented. And in many ways, it's been a gift. Technology has made communication easier, more frequent, and more accessible; however, as mentioned above, more is not always more.

With the proliferation of AI notetaking, scheduling and follow-through have never been easier. We can automate reminders. Capture meeting summaries. Track engagement. Leveraging technology in these ways can also improve operational efficiency in managing personalized client communications.

Despite all the tools, consistency is still where many advisors struggle. Clients don't need more channels. They need predictability and clarity to meet their needs.

They want to know:

- When they'll hear from you.
- What you'll cover that they need to know.
- And that you'll show up – especially when markets test client confidence.

Delivering timely and relevant messages across channels is essential to meeting these client expectations. Technology makes communication easier. It doesn't make it personalized or consistent. That part still requires discipline.

## Ask Better Questions and Fully Listen to The Answer

Advisors often default to their preferred communication style. It's easier than tailoring each client's conversation to client preference. If you're analytical, you lean into data. If you're relational, you lean into stories. If you're tactical, you lean into action steps.

The best communicators though are those who adjust to the client. This means avoiding industry jargon and using language clients understand, which fosters clear communication and empathy. Personalized communications can significantly improve customer satisfaction and retention rates in financial advisory services.

Listening is becoming more valuable than investment acumen, because investment access is increasingly commoditized. Clients can get data anywhere. They can't get thoughtful interpretation and emotional calibration everywhere.

The greatest tool in today's advisor-client world is simple: The ability to ask questions – and truly listen to the answers.

Not questions you already know the answer to. Real questions. For example:



That's a yes-or-no question. It doesn't tell you much.

Instead, try:

**“How does volatility impact how you invest?”**

That one question opens the door to behavior, emotion, and decision-making patterns.

You'll discover whether the client is likely to:

- Become aggressive,
- Freeze,
- Pull money out,
- Or seek safety.

That's actionable insight.

When you listen well, you don't just manage money. You manage behavior. And behavior is impactful in determining long-term outcomes.

## Understanding Client Personas

It's one thing to listen to your clients. It's another to build models for similar clients that bring efficiency to your financial practice.

It's easy to categorize clients by their general life stage:

- Far from retirement
- Nearing retirement
- In retirement
- Legacy-focused

That works for investment planning and getting a general idea about risk tolerance and priorities. In a perfect world, though, you tailor your segmentation to your clients.

Asking the right questions can reveal whether your clients are:

- Investment-driven — focused on returns and performance.
- Plan-driven — focused on structure and long-term strategy.
- Income-focused — centered on reliable cash flow.
- Relational — need conversation and reassurance.
- Data-driven — want charts, spreadsheets, and details.

Once you recognize the patterns, you can adjust your communication to fit. To dig deeper, consider asking:

- How do they prefer to receive information?
- Confirm format preferences: Excel? Visual dashboards? Phone calls? Email recaps?
- Adjust your tone and depth accordingly.



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## Communicating with Clients That Are Couples

When it comes to working with couples, understanding the dynamics and individual preferences becomes even more important.

One spouse may be plan-driven and analytical. The other may be relational and emotionally oriented. If you communicate in only one style, someone feels unheard. Advisors who succeed with couples ensure there are systems and routines in place to ensure both voices are included in any shared plans. Creating approval workflows can streamline gathering shareholder input. Joint and individual meetings can be a great tool, especially at the beginning of a relationship to build an understanding of communication preferences and goals.

## Build Trust Through Experience, Not Just Information

Communication doesn't start at the annual review. It starts at onboarding.

Trust builds when:

- Expectations are clear from day one.
- Communication cadence is defined.
- Fees and performance are presented transparently.
- Clients know exactly what to expect next.

Managing expectations from the outset is essential: establishing a communication schedule and proactively addressing concerns helps keep clients informed and aligned, reducing misunderstandings.

In essence, trust builds when expectations are clear from day one. You should design onboarding communication intentionally. Plans are built to weather uncertainty. Communication reconnects clients to the plan — not the headlines. When clients understand what they own and why they own it, volatility feels less threatening.

After key milestones — first review, first statement, first distribution — collect feedback. Ask what's working and what could be clearer.

## Simplicity Builds Confidence

Information only empowers if it can be absorbed. Simplicity and confidence go hand in hand: filter complexity so clients can remember it, repeat it, and feel certain about it. To truly empower clients, it's essential to deliver relevant communications— messages that are timely, personalized, and directly applicable to their needs.

You might think your uniqueness is:

- Your investment strategy.
- Your service model.
- Your process.

The real answer? It's you. Your personal touch in communication builds trust and confidence, setting you apart from competitors.

Your judgment determines:

- How much detail to provide.
- When to simplify.
- When to go deeper.
- When to pause.

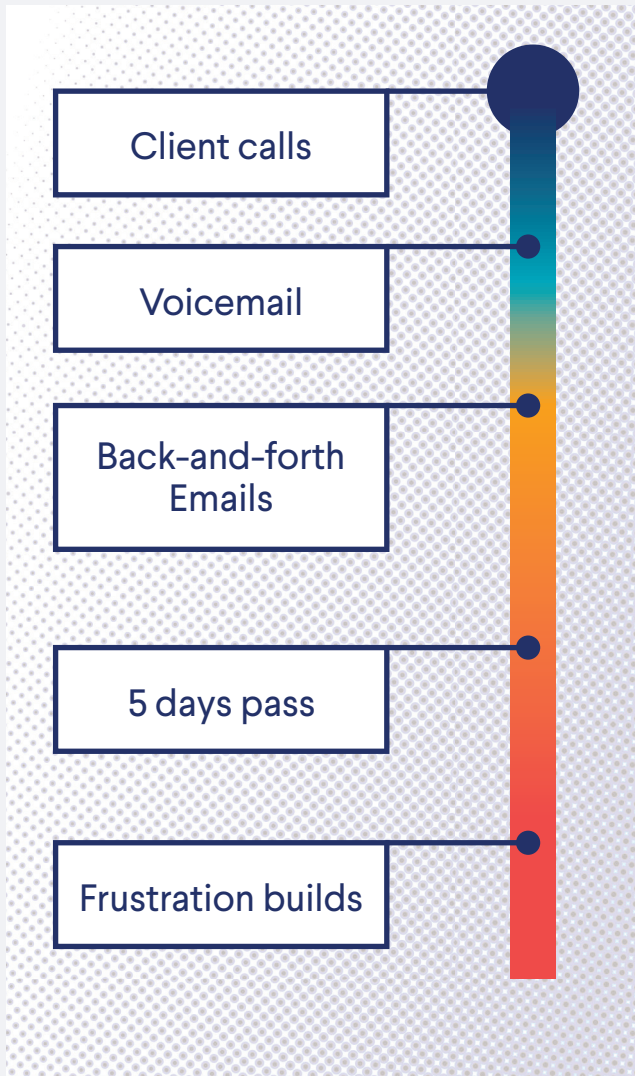
**Confidence comes from clarity, and clarity is a competitive advantage.**

When providing detail, it's important to create compliant communications that are both clear and meet industry requirements. That's why we provide advisor resources and support for each of our product offerings: no hidden agenda, just pure value.

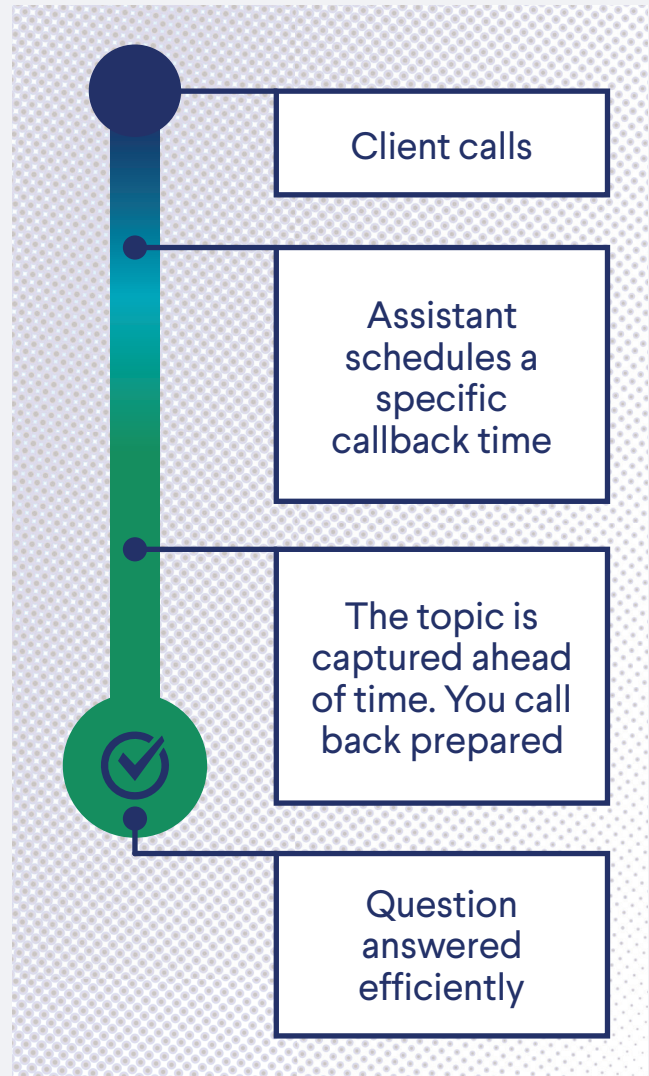
## Efficiency Signals Competence

Responsiveness matters more today than ever.

Here's a familiar scenario:



Now contrast that with:



Efficiency isn't about rushing, it's about reducing friction. A well-coordinated team ensures that every step of the client interaction is handled smoothly, minimizing delays and confusion. Organizational processes and structure play a key role in supporting this efficiency, leading to higher client satisfaction.

That signals competence and builds trust. Clients don't just evaluate your investment results. They evaluate how easy it is to do business with you.

## AI Technology Can Support Consistency – But It Doesn't Replace You

AI hasn't been fully fleshed out in financial services. We're all still figuring out where it fits and where it doesn't.

Used correctly, it can:

- Track talk-time balance in meetings.
- Count how many open-ended questions you ask.
- Automate follow-ups and summaries.

Digital transformation and the adoption of advanced client communication management (CCM) technologies are reshaping financial advisor client engagement by allowing for highly personalized, targeted communications. Technology enhances client engagement by enabling personalized communications through data integration.

That's useful.

But here's what it can't do:

**Replace human judgment.**

The only truly unique thing about your practice is you:

- Your ability to listen.
- Your ability to simplify.
- Your ability to show up consistently – especially when markets get rocky.

Technology supports consistency and efficiency. It does not create trust.

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MKT20960026 | 2026030017 | EXP 03/28

## Final Thoughts

Client engagement isn't about more touchpoints. It's about more meaningful ones:

- Consistent communication.
- Thoughtful questions.
- Clear explanations.
- Efficient processes.
- Simple delivery.

Focusing on the most effective ways to engage clients, such as hosting client appreciation events, is key to driving growth and profitability. Engaged clients lead to higher growth and profitability in financial advisory practices. Business development plays a crucial role in achieving future success for financial advisors by integrating strategies for client acquisition, retention, and ongoing relationship building.

When you get that right, performance conversations become easier. A holistic strategy for customer experience and communication not only streamlines processes but also fosters long-term relationships and strengthens client relationships. Effective communication drives customer loyalty and ensures advisors are prepared for future communications needs as technology and customer expectations evolve. And when communication is handled well, you don't just retain clients, you build relationships that last decades.