

# Move the Needle

## Your guide to becoming a leading advisor.

Use the checklist to review the 26 best practices and determine areas of opportunity where you can move the needle to better your business.

### Business management

Proven Practices	○	●	●	Move the Needle
You pursue or have professional designations and credentials.	You have no professional designations or credentials.	You have one of CFP, CLU, QAFP, PI.Fin, FEA, TEP, CFA, CIM.	You have two or more of CFP, CLU, QAFP, PI.Fin, FEA, TEP, CFA, CIM.	You ensure your team holds all professional designations and credentials.
You delegate functions to your team members as opposed to tasks.	You have no team members.	Everyone does a bit of everything.	Team members are responsible for functions (ex: marketing, in-force management, applications, etc.).	You regularly connect with your team for both business meetings and appreciation events to boost team morale.
You use technology to improve performance.	No customer relationship management in place.	You have a CRM but only use it to store contact information.	You use CRM to be pro-active and improve efficiency.	You use other technology, such as scheduling services and feedback surveys, to create seamless client experiences.
You have a clear and well-defined vision for the future of your practice.	You're unsure about your vision, or only have a sales target.	You have an idea but it's not written down or formalised.	You have a written vision for the future of your practice, and it has been shared with your team.	You create actionable and timely goals throughout the year to achieve your vision, and allow your team to contribute and evaluate your progress.

<b>Proven Practices</b>	○	◐	◑	<b>Move the Needle</b>
You have a comprehensive, written business plan.	You don't have a written business plan.	You have revenue or sales targets in place.	You have a written business plan that includes targets as well as strategies and processes for how to achieve them, and the plan is shared with team.	Your business plan includes both short- and long-term goals, and you review your plan on a monthly basis as a team.
You schedule time to work on your business.	You don't have time scheduled to work on your business.	You'll work on your business as is necessary, but often as a last priority.	You have regularly scheduled time (at least monthly) dedicated to working on the business and follow a process.	You are able to delegate business processes to your team so you can work on your business more often than in it.
You perform annual reviews with clients.	You don't meet with clients at a regular frequency.	You meet with some clients annually but not all, or review frequency is less than once per year.	You perform pre-scheduled annual reviews with all clients.	You look for opportunities during annual reviews to ask for feedback, or for potential referrals from clients' networks.
You have reciprocal business engagements with other specialists.	You don't partner with other professionals or specialists to create referrals.	You give or receive referrals (not both) from other professionals on occasion.	You have a process for regularly giving and receiving referrals for a mutually beneficial relationship.	You partner with specialists to organize events, such as webinars and seminars, networking opportunities, and more.
You have a coach and/or advisory board.	You don't work with any mentors, coaches, or advisory boards.	You have mentors or informal relationships with industry experts or more experienced advisors who offer advice or guidance.	You have a coach, advisory board, or are part of a study group.	You seek advice from your coach or board to refine your business model, and become a coach or mentor to a newer advisor.
You have a written succession plan.	You don't have a succession plan.	You have an idea of what you want to do but haven't written a plan.	You have a formal succession plan and have identified a successor.	You prepare clients and your practice ahead of the succession.

## Client experience

Proven Practices	○	◐	●	Move the Needle
You have a defined ideal client profile.	You're willing to work with anyone.	You have a target market but still taking anyone on as a client.	You have clearly defined the attributes of your ideal client profile and only accept new clients who fit that profile.	You have business and marketing strategies in place to engage more with your top and ideal clients throughout the year.
Wealth only: You have defined asset minimums for new clients.	You don't have defined asset minimums.	You have a rough asset minimum level but do not communicate or enforce it.	You have a clearly stated asset minimum for new clients that is shared with the team.	You use your online presence to communicate the type of clients you want to work with, such as through video or your website, so you attract the right clients to your practice.
You use a meeting agenda for client meetings.	You don't use a meeting agenda.	You sometimes use one, or the agenda doesn't allow for client input.	You always use an agenda that allows for client input.	Your agenda clearly states when a discussion of a sale will take place in order to alleviate clients' potential concern that you're sales-focused too early in your client engagement process.
You segment existing clients.	You don't have clearly defined client segments.	You have client segments who all receive the same level of service.	You have clearly defined client segments that receive varying levels of service.	You proactively schedule tactics to engage client segments, inform your team about the tactics and where they can be involved, and assign your team accountability.

<b>Proven Practices</b>	○	◐	◑	<b>Move the Needle</b>
You have a defined client engagement process to share with clients and referral partners.	You have no standard process for working with clients.	You follow a somewhat consistent process but haven't written it down or made it visual.	You have a visually illustrated client engagement process that is shared with clients, prospects and referral partners.	You introduce your client engagement process, mission, vision and value proposition during your first meeting, and ask clients if they have any questions around your process.
You host client seminars or webinars.	You don't host seminars or webinars.	You've hosted one webinar or seminar in the last year.	You regularly host webinars or seminars to connect with prospects and educate clients and referral partners.	You partner with centres of influence to host client seminars or webinars and create more networking and referral opportunities for one another.
You run client appreciation events and tactics.	You don't run client appreciation tactics or events.	You show appreciation through a nominal gift or card.	You show appreciation through nominal gifts and events to strengthen relationships with clients.	You invite top clients' friends and family to events, and you record opportunities for appreciation using CRM software, such as upcoming anniversaries or children's graduations.
You have a process in place to ask for referrals and client testimonials.	You don't have a process to ask for referrals and testimonials.	You have no process but occasionally ask clients for referrals and testimonials.	You have a process in place to ask for referrals and client testimonials.	You ask clients for permission to engage with their referral, and ask them to make the introduction for you.

# Marketing

Proven Practices	○	◐	●	Move the Needle
You can clearly articulate your brand or value proposition.	You haven't thought about your brand.	You have an idea of your value or strengths but haven't spent time developing your brand.	You have a clearly defined brand that appeals to your ideal client profile.	You incorporate your brand in your online presence and/or through video so prospects and clients can see and understand your value.
You have a rehearsed client attraction conversation.	You don't have a prepared answer or your answer focuses on the products you sell.	You have a long-winded or inconsistent message.	You use a consistent message that focuses on the problem you can help solve for clients.	You can adapt your client attraction conversation for varying ideal clients, such as business owners or families.
You have an online presence including a website or social media.	You don't have a social media presence or website.	You have a social media presence or website that is out of date or not representative of your brand.	You have a social media presence or website that clearly illustrates your brand.	You keep your online presence up to date, including adding new team members, updating office hours, incorporating branding and videos, and more.
You're active on LinkedIn and/or other social media platforms.	You're not active on social media.	You occasionally comment, like, or share posts made by others.	You actively use social media on a regular basis to amplify your brand and prospect for clients.	You invest in promotional advertising on social media channels to increase views on your posts and profile.
You're leveraging video in your marketing.	You have not used video.	You share videos made by others.	You create your own video content to introduce yourself and educate.	You circulate your video through your website and social media channels.

<b>Proven Practices</b>	○	◐	◑	<b>Move the Needle</b>
You circulate content with clients, prospects, and COIs.	You haven't circulated content in the last year.	You occasionally share an article of interest with clients.	You have a plan in place and circulate content at a regular frequency.	With consent, you circulate content and ask for feedback to understand content your audience likes to see.
You have client-facing materials with your logo on them.	You don't have any branded client-facing materials (ex: brochure, team introduction, white papers, etc.).	You have out-dated or inconsistent branded content.	You have up-to-date client-facing material or ads with your logo.	You have a plan in place to distribute and advertise your materials so you stay top of mind with clients and prospects.
You have a written marketing plan.	You have no marketing plan.	You have a rough idea but nothing is planned out.	You have an annual formal marketing plan and are executing it.	You review your plan on a frequent basis and make updates as needed so you are reaching your marketing and business goals.



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