

# Same Side of the Table: How to Stop Selling and Start Growing Your Business

By Joe Campisi

**Financial advisors who desire to find themselves seated next to their clients, and not across from them, need to make sure they're doing the following:**

## More Listening, Less Talking

One of the most important lessons for a financial advisor who is relatively new to the field to grasp is the power of listening. When first meeting with a prospective client, be sure to offer ample time for the individual to speak, this way you will gain a fairly good picture not only of the person's financial status, but of things like their personality and family life.

After asking some introductory questions during an initial meeting with a prospect, an advisor should cease talking, and allow the individual plenty of time to tell their story.

An advisor who doesn't just 'hear,' but truly 'listens,' to a prospective client will develop a clearer picture on how to individually cater services to that person.

For example, if the prospect speaks about his or her high school-aged child, the advisor might want to make a note to place an extra emphasis on education funding when developing the person's financial plan.

Advisors are likely to see more business when they pay closer attention to a prospect's story than if they simply try to sell a one-size-fits-all plan.

## 'Message Received'

We've already learned that when a prospect talks, an advisor should really listen.

Focusing on the needs of the prospective client and not simply waiting for your turn to speak is crucial if you want to make an impact.

One piece of advice would be to repeat back to the prospect what they told you after they are finished speaking as a way of showing that you truly understand them and the issues they may bring to the table.

This small, simple action could be the difference between securing a new client and sending a prospect walking.

## Service, NOT Sales

Advisors looking to develop a thriving practice always need to remember that the name of the game is 'service, not 'sales.'

Making sales is, of course, an integral component of any successful financial planning business, however, it is certainly not the be-all and end-all of the profession.

After all, without good service, clients will undoubtedly pass you up for another advising firm, one that views the prospect more as an individual, and not as a dollar sign.

To develop a reputable business, make sure to put plenty of emphasis on servicing your clients in a holistic manner, and not just trying to sell them the 'product of the day,' whatever that may be at any given moment.