



Kaisiking 2mm LCD Repair Tape Phone Repair
\$7.99 ~~\$12.99~~ ✓prime
★★★★★



Android Phones and Tablets For Dummies (For
\$6.02 ~~\$26.99~~
★★★★★



YAMXIN Laptop Camera Cover Slide 9 Pack(3
\$6.99 ✓prime
★★★★★

Ads by Amazon

Banking

Advisors Plop Down The Welcome Mat To Impress Prospective Clients

Madeleine Bruder · 2 weeks ago 3 minutes read



New advisors often think they need to showcase their technical expertise to convert prospects into clients. That leads them into a trap: talking too much.

X

While turning prospects into clients takes knowledge of financial planning and investment management, soft skills also matter. The ability to connect with people — to listen and retain what they say — plays a vital role.

Perhaps the most intangible aspect of wooing prospects is making them feel important. The early impressions they form of you and your firm will influence whether they're comfortable signing on.

Curious, engaging conversationalists wield an advantage over self-promoters to convert prospects. By getting others to open up, you put them at ease and learn more about them.

Prospects may expect you to launch into a lecture about money. But showing interest in their family, career and hobbies subverts that expectation and helps you build rapport.

Better yet, welcome their arrival with fanfare. View them as VIPs from the moment they walk in the door.

“People love to see their name in lights,” said **Ralph Bender**, a certified financial planner at Enduring Wealth Advisors in Temecula, Calif.

For years, Bender has set up a computer monitor that prospects notice as soon as they arrive. He created a PowerPoint slide template so that visitors see their name on the screen with a welcome message.

“The night before, we enter the names of each person who's scheduled to come in the next day,” he said. “It's all preprogrammed so all our receptionist has to do is advance the slide to the next name” throughout the day.

Create A Calm, Soothing Environment For Visitors

Once a newcomer arrives, Bender says, they do not wait alone. A designated greeter usually waits with them, striking up friendly conversation and offering beverages and snacks.



“We follow the person’s lead,” Bender said. If someone’s on their phone or seems preoccupied, Bender’s greeter — typically his administrative aide or marketing specialist — doesn’t hover.

“It’s a chance to answer (a prospect’s) questions and make them feel like invited guests in your home,” he said. “And after the prospect leaves, I might debrief with (my greeter) on whether we want them as a client.”

Little things can make a big difference to convert prospects. Prospects feel more special if they’re instantly comfortable in your office environment.

Soon after prospects arrive, Kashif Ahmed — a certified financial planner at American Private Wealth in Bedford, Mass. — invites them to help themselves to a wide range of drinks.

“A lot of advisors ask ‘Can I get you some coffee?’ but maybe they want a protein shake or wine or seltzer,” said Ahmed, He prefers to guide them to a fully stocked refrigerator and let them choose.

Ahmed also wants to create a soothing space for prospects. Because they might feel anxious talking about money, he designed his surroundings for tranquillity. Warm colors, such as burgundy, enhance his office’s calming effect.

“When you enter the office, the windows are behind me and visitors get an expansive view of greenery and trees,” he said. “It’s relaxing.”

Focus All Your Attention To Convert Prospects

Another homey touch that delights prospects is seeing fresh flowers on the table. It adds a colorful flourish to the room.

Kelly Graves, a certified financial planner at Wealth Enhancement Group in Charlotte, N.C., finds that flowers lift everyone’s mood.



“People love seeing them,” Graves said. “It shows that you’re appreciated. And it sets us apart” because advisors don’t usually set out fresh flowers for prospects and other visitors.

It pays to prepare before meeting a prospect. The introductory chat flows more freely when advisors get a head start in learning about the individual’s background and interests.

Graves likes to do a quick online search of the person he’s about to meet. He doesn’t overdo it or come across as intrusive. But he looks for ways to bond with prospects.

“It might help me establish common ground,” he said. “If I know ahead of time that they like golf, I might ask about how much golf they play.”

An advisor’s body language can also make a prospect feel important. Ahmed will begin by putting away his cellphone and removing other distractions.

Some advisors put their computer screen in sleep mode to avoid flashing green and red as stocks trade. They may also close the door and start with an icebreaker such as, “How did you find out about us?” or “What brings you here?”

“I make eye contact and show it’s all about them, not me,” Ahmed said. “If they start to go off on a tangent, I let them. It’s difficult for most advisors because they can’t wait to impress prospects with their knowledge. But by listening more than talking, you make prospects feel special.”

[How A Scientist Overcame Challenges To Be A Global Ocean Expert](#)

[You’d Better Make Time For Strategic Planning](#)

[Inspirational Quotes: Nelson Mandela, Carla Harris And Others](#)

[IBD Digital: Unlock IBD’s Premium Stock Lists, Tools And Analysis Today](#)

[MarketSmith: Research, Charts, Data And Coaching All In One Place](#)