

Client Communication & More

WHY is this Important?

Every interaction with a client either increases or erodes trust.

Every time the phone is answered, an email is replied to, or that a client is greeted at the office, we have an opportunity to increase trust. This includes every type of correspondence – written, verbal or in person. Think about the various types of information that flow from your team and your office to your clients – all your letters, emails, newsletters, website information, LinkedIn Profile, etc.



This is where we will help you take an inventory of your various forms of Client Communication to ensure it is professional, consistent and client friendly. We will also help you develop an important piece of your branding communication – your Introduction Kit.

This best practice will ensure all client communications are professional, consistent and predictable for your clients.

WHAT You Can Expect from this Best Practice

- To create increased structure related to all aspects of your branding
- To have a professional Introduction Kit which:
 - Attracts the right types of clients (New Clients)
 - Helps clients understand who you are today (Existing Clients)
 - Introduces you to others in your Professional Network (Strategic Partners)
- To ensure all other aspects of your branding are consistent
- To build trust because of your Client Communication strategy



HOW to Get Started

Establish Branding Consistency & Congruency

1. Assign someone on the team to be responsible for Client Communications in terms of branding and consistency.
2. Carefully review the [Communication & Branding Guidelines](#) to assess your client-facing materials for consistency and congruency. This includes following core areas of your Client Communication:
 - Traditional Facing Communication (Letters, Agenda, etc.)
 - Email
 - Introduction Kit
 - Website
 - LinkedIn Profile (or other social media presence)
 - Newsletters
 - Verbal Communication
 - All other client-facing communication (meeting tools, marketing, etc.)
3. Use the [Annual Branding Checklist](#) to adopt a systematized approach to managing the various aspects of your branding in a simplified 'one and done' approach each year.
4. To understand our recommendations for the Introduction Kit, review [The Introduction Kit – A Branding Anchor](#)
5. Review [Your Core Introduction Components](#) to kick start your Introduction Kit
6. The following items are to provide you with a brief refresher of the Introduction Kit:
 - Kit 1 - [Handwritten Greeting Card](#)
 - Kit 2 - [Prospective Client Cover Letter](#)
 - Kit 3 - [An Introduction to Our Team](#)
 - Kit 4 – [Advisor Biography](#)
 - Kit 5 - [Our Partnership with You](#)
 - Kit 6 - [Our Partnership with \[Firm\]](#)
 - Kit 7 – [Our Approach to Wealth Management](#)
 - Kit 7 – [Wealth Management Graphic](#) – Portrait [\[Word\]](#) or [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Kit 7 – [Wealth Management Graphic](#) – Landscape [\[Word\]](#) or [\[PDF\]](#)

7. A reminder to make sure that all Client Communications are compliance approved.
 - Have contact information for your Marketing and/or Compliance department readily available.
8. Use the Introduction Kit Checklist to coordinate the process of completing either the creation or the updating of your existing Introduction Kit.
9. Take time to investigate what else might be available to add to your marketing via:
 - Your Organization's available resources
 - CUSO regarding the PSA and more
 - Aviso
10. Be sure to have all your digital communications organized in digital folders on your shared drive that are easy to access so you don't waste time looking for things you've already created, which can be frustrating! More on this will be covered in the best practice called **Systematize Your Information**.
11. Be sure to have all physical communication items also organized in a place where everyone on the team knows where to find them.
12. Use the Procedures Manual to gain consistency and quality control for all aspects of your Client Communication.

Communication & Branding Guidelines

Use these communication guidelines to improve the consistency of your brand within your practice.

Choose and review one communication area at a times.

Involve your team and make sure they are fully aware of all communication standards going forward.



Traditional Client-Facing Items

1. Have a good up-to-date supply of your regularly used branded items including:
 - Business Cards
 - Folders
 - Letterhead
 - Notepads
 - Pens
2. Create standardized templates for all client communication¹ including:
 - Letters
 - Agendas
 - Client Forms
 - Any other written deliverables involved in delivering your client experience
3. Follow all firm-established branding standards for all forms of written communication related to:
 - Size and style of paper
 - Logo size and placement
 - Headers and footers
 - Page set up (margins, spacing and layout)
 - Regular Font Style & Size
 - Heading Font Style & Size
 - Written Salutations and Closures

¹ Always consult firm policies and standards for marketing and written correspondence. Everything must be in accordance with firm marketing and legal standards (i.e. compliant).



Email Communication

1. Ensure all your email communication adheres to the same branding standards as in your written communication (i.e., logos, font style, size, etc.) as established by the firm.
2. Develop a standardized email signature for the team including name, title, team, and relevant contact information.
3. Create an “Email Template” for your standard Out-of-Office Reply and make it interesting.
4. Create an “Email Template” for commonly used correspondence to ensure efficiency and consistency:
 - 1st Appointment Confirmation
 - 2nd Appointment Confirmation
 - 3rd Appointment Confirmation
 - Review Meeting Confirmation
 - Review Meeting Follow Up



Introduction Kit

1. Ensure that your Introduction Kits adhere to the same branding standards as in your written communication (i.e., logos, font style, size, etc.) as established by the firm.
2. Ensure that the information in your Introduction Kit supports and is consistent with your other client communication (websites, LinkedIn Profile, etc.).
3. Set a reminder annually to review and update your Introduction Kit.



Website

1. Ensure the standards for your web-based communication adhere to the same branding standards as in your written communication (i.e., logos, font style, size, etc.) as established by the firm.
2. Ensure the information on your website supports and is consistent with your other client communication (Introduction Kit, LinkedIn Profile, etc.).
3. Set a reminder annually to review and update your website.



LinkedIn Profile (or other social media presence)

1. Ensure that your LinkedIn Profile adheres to the same branding standards as in your written communication (i.e., logos, font style, size, etc.) as established by the firm.
2. Ensure the information on your LinkedIn Profile supports and is consistent with your other client communication (Introduction Kit, websites, etc.).
3. Set a reminder annually to review and update your LinkedIn Profile.
4. Additional information on maintaining and managing your LinkedIn and/or other social media in terms of the dynamic content is covered in the best practice called **How to Integrate Social Media**.



Newsletters (Digital or Hardcopy)

1. Ensure the standards for your newsletters adhere to the same branding standards as in your written communication (i.e., logos, font style, size, etc.).
2. Create a “Newsletter Template” to increase efficiency and consistency.
3. Develop standard topics or sections included in each newsletter.



Verbal Communication

1. Develop a standard telephone script for answering the telephone and make sure everyone on the team adheres to it.
2. Create a standard voice message and make sure everyone has it recorded appropriately on their voice mail.
3. Identify other routine client interactions and create scripts to support them, such as:
 - Setting up Appointments
 - Confirming Appointments
 - Standard Service Calls (Housekeeping & Tax Time)

Annual Branding Checklist	Completed on:	Completed by:
Traditional Client-Facing Items		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Business Cards 5. Folders 6. Letter Head 7. Note Pads 8. Pens 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Standard Letters 10. Standard Agendas 11. Standard Client Forms 		
Email Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Consistent Email Signature 13. Out of Office Template 14. 1st Appointment Confirmation 15. 2nd Appointment Confirmation 16. 3rd Appointment Confirmation 17. Review Meeting Confirmation 18. Review Meeting Follow Up 		
Introduction Kit		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Review • Have 6 to 12 Assemble and ready to go • Have cards on hand for handwritten note 		
Website		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Review 		
LinkedIn Profile		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Review • Triggers set on Your CRM for regular posting 		
Newsletters		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triggers set on Your CRM for regular posting 		
Verbal Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule & Confirm Meeting Call Scripts • Standard Service Call Script 		

The Introduction Kit: A Branding Anchor

We emphasize the importance of creating Introduction Kits because they are used in a variety of important branding situations:

- They attract the right types of clients (New Clients)
- They update current clients so they understand who you are today (Existing Clients)
- They introduce you to others in your Professional Network (Strategic Partners)

In marketing terms, this is known as an aspect of branding. By branding yourself properly, you make yourself more visible, credible and desirable to your target market.

When you provide material that is mostly product or performance related, you're communicating the wrong message and worse yet, attracting the wrong types of clients.



How many times have you seen information kits which are simply an assembly of every product brochure available? Quite simply, being a product pusher isn't attractive enough to prompt a prospective client to 'take action'. Yes, this approach to providing information may be easy, but it isn't effective. It's important to remember that what you offer is a process, not a product. There is a huge difference. When you offer a process, you are creating a working relationship. This attracts the right types of clients.

Your Core Introduction Components

What follows is a list of some essential components for an effective Introduction Kit that will pique the interest of your ideal prospects.

1. Handwritten Card

To make a great first impression for the prospective client receiving the Introduction Kit, we recommend you include a quality card with a hand-written message inside. This personal touch may be small on the surface, but it makes an impression on people.

This level of personal care and attention won't go unnoticed in our ever-increasing digital world.

2. Introduction Kit Cover Letter

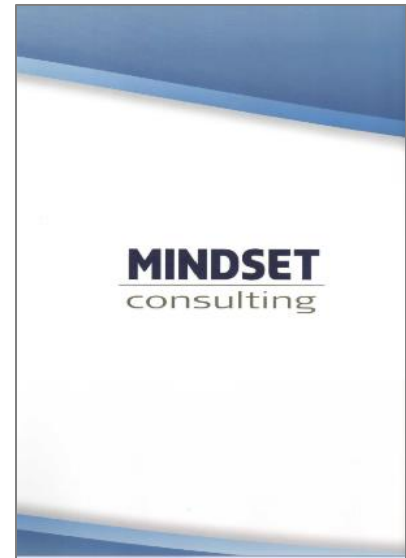
Your Introduction Kit will be accompanied by a Cover Letter to set the stage for why they are receiving it in the first place. Since we have three distinctive uses for the Introduction Kit, there are 3 cover letters:

- New Clients – this is covered in Pillar 3: Client Onboarding
- Existing Clients – this is covered in Pillar 4: Client rebranding
- Strategic Partners – this is covered in our Strategic Partners section of the program.

3. Your Team Description

If there are others who assist you with client servicing, here is the place you want to introduce them. This piece describes those individuals you work with directly to provide service to your clients. The goal is not to write resumes here, but instead to briefly convey the strengths and experiences of anyone who is viewed as part of your client servicing team – and what their role is in the process.

This kit piece also reinforces the concept of working with other related professionals to ensure full coordination of your financial affairs, which may include experts who are not directly on your team but are affiliated through the same organization or represent a third-party.



4. Your Biography

This piece is a 'first impression' piece for you personally. It needs to be one-page, professionally presented and interesting – which means different from most of the bios out there.

The Typical, but Required Bio Pieces

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.

The Not So Typical

Include why you do what you do – this will make others believe in what you do and want to read more about you. It brings an emotional element to what can often be a dry and boring piece. 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. People are driven by connections and the more they can connect to you outside of the work, the easier it is to build chemistry – an important aspect of trust.

5. Our Partnership with You

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

6. Our Partnership with [Insert Your Firm Here]

Potential clients may want to learn more about the firm you are associated with to establish further credibility. As such, you can provide them with a brief overview of the firm and the resources they have access to as a client because of that relationship.

7. Our Approach to Wealth Management

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.

Other Possible Introduction Kit Inclusions

These items are the 'extra' pieces that are not essential to the kit but can provide added value if you have them. Unlike the core pieces discussed above, these items are presented in the left-hand folder pocket.

Article Reprints & Other 3rd Party Insights

There is nothing like social proof, so include an article from a magazine or newspaper that lend credibility to your approach. Remember that the value you bring will be contrasted against the value that your prospect feels he/she is receiving from their current financial planner or advisor, so be sure that your kit contains value-added information.

If you do not have these 'extra' pieces, proceed with your kit without them. You can always add them later if desired, but we would not recommend you hold up implanting your Introduction Kit because these items are not ready.

Less is More

We strongly recommend you AVOID including industry material such as brochures or prospectuses. They do have their place, but it is not here. Again, don't associate yourself with products. If we lead with products and performance, we diminish the value of our process. Just because it's available and free doesn't make it the right thing to include. We want to follow the 'keep it simple' rule here.

All in the Delivery

As you know, consistent and professional letterhead, logo, business cards and a matching presentation folder are a must. Follow all firm-related marketing formats and compliance standards when assembling and delivering your Introduction Kits.

Handwritten Card

This stunning greeting card is to be handwritten and attached to your Introduction Kit.

If applicable, add a personal note to the card about something from the initial conversation you had (i.e., interesting and relevant Client Profile information).

Dear [Prospective New Client],

It was a pleasure speaking with you today.

As promised, here is our Introduction Kit to provide you with additional information about who we are what we do.

I look forward to meeting you.

Advisor's Signature



Prospective Client Letter

Note: If you typically use another term to describe what you do please change that throughout this document to ensure consistency in your branding. The term you use should position you beyond being simply an 'investment advisor' and should suggest a range of solutions you can offer to your clients.

November 14, 2021

Name
Address
Address

Dear [Prospective Client],

We are committed to helping our clients simplify, organize and coordinate all aspects of their Wealth Management. In other words, we help our clients connect the dots in their complex world of wealth and investments to achieve the financial piece of mind they are looking for.

We view Wealth Management as an ongoing process of preparing for and reacting to Critical Financial Events. This can be as diverse as planning for retirement, selling a business, receiving an inheritance, buying a recreational property or proactively planning for your legacy. Our approach helps clients understand how to achieve their financial and lifestyle goals. This approach also has us working in collaboration with other professionals.

The enclosed package will provide you with a brief introduction to us. As I mentioned, we will follow up shortly to arrange an initial meeting. During that initial meeting, I review important information you need to know about us and our approach to wealth management, and of course, answer any questions you might have. We will spend most of our time together, however, discussing your wealth and lifestyle goals, and what you expect from the wealth management process.

The purpose of the initial meeting is for each of us to determine whether there is a fit for us to work together. In our experience, this is the foundation of a solid long-term relationship.

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Advisor's Name
Advisor's Title

An Introduction to [Your Team]

[Advisor] has brought together a team of specialists to ensure his/her clients receive efficient, expert and friendly financial planning advice and servicing.

[Advisor] - Financial Advisor

As your Financial Advisor, [Advisor] will coordinate the financial planning process for you. [Advisor] will help you to identify your goals and he will work with you to implement a series of strategies that will help you to realize your vision for the future.

[Assistant] - Administration/Client Service Manager

[Assistant] ensures that our clients receive the best possible service. She will book appointments for you and is the first person you should call if you have any questions about your financial planning process. She will ensure that the appropriate member of our team responds to your query.

[Name of Additional Team Member]

Title

Include a brief description of everyone on your team.

Our Other Professional Resources

Because your financial situation is often complex, [Advisor] typically works directly with other professionals to design and implement the strategies that will help you to achieve your goals. He relies on a network of professionals who provide technical advice as required.

The professionals [advisor] works with include:

- Estate Lawyer
- Certified Public Accountant
- Mortgage Broker
- Real Estate (Commercial and residential)
- General Insurance

Financial Advisor Name,

Financial Advisor Title

Professional Experience

Start with your name, current role on the team and brief statement of what you do.

Next, you may wish to provide a sentence or two about why you do what you do.

Then, provide relevant information such as years of experience and previous companies you've worked with.

Education

Provide information regarding your specialized industry designations and certifications.

- If you are a CFP, include the following paragraph:

[Advisor] is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP), so you can be sure that he provides expert and professional financial planning services. To earn the CFP designation, [Advisor] had to complete an approved educational program, pass a rigorous examination and meet stringent experience requirements. [Advisor] also adheres to a professional Code of Ethics and he fulfills annual continuing education requirements to remain aware of current planning strategies and financial trends.

- If you have any other designations directly related to a niche, you are actively trying to grow be sure to showcase it here.

Provide information regarding any other education you may have (i.e., University or College).

Personal Information

Provide information related to your hobbies, recreational interests, volunteer positions, boards, family, etc.

Only share information you are comfortable with.

Our Partnership with You

We provide comprehensive wealth management in the context of a long-term partnership with you. Through our experience we have learned it is important that everyone is clear on what to expect if we are to develop and maintain a successful working relationship – one where I can help you achieve your wealth and lifestyle goals.

Keys to a Successful Relationship: What You Can Expect

You can expect that we will consistently and responsibly perform all services related to the provision, review and ongoing monitoring of the wealth management solutions we implement on your behalf. We will always:

- Strive to acquire and maintain a thorough understanding of your financial goals
- Update your current financial information on a regular basis
- Carefully assess and monitor your investment risk and time frame
- Explain the implications of all recommended strategies and answer questions you have
- Update you as and when appropriate by email, mail and phone
- Meet with you regularly to review what matters most to you
- Act as your primary Financial Advisor, coordinating the efforts of others when required
- Treat you with utmost respect and professionalism

Keys to a Successful Relationship: What I Can Expect

We've learned through experience that effective communication and mutual respect are essential to a long-term partnership. A few other criteria which help define our success include:

- Your commitment to me as your Financial Advisor
- Your trust in my abilities to provide you with recommendations and advice
- Your complete disclosure about what matters to you most

We need you to know that our recommendations are always based on helping you achieve your financial and lifestyle goals. It's important you understand that all advice will be based on the information you provide to me. Therefore, if I am to provide advice best suited to you, I need you to fully participate in the financial planning process with me.

Keys to a Successful Relationship: Mutual Responsibilities

Having a solid partnership is essential to effective wealth management. We both agree to make your wealth management a priority and will keep each other informed of any new developments that might affect these strategies. We will also agree to take time to regularly review what matters most to you.

We will always work together in the spirit of mutual trust, respect, and understanding.

Our Partnership with [Firm]

We have chosen to work in partnership with [Name of Firm] to ensure we can offer our clients financial planning advice and solutions second to none. With [Name of Firm] as our partner, we can also ensure our financial planning practice will deliver exceptional client service and at the same time allow us to have access to the broad range of expertise required to plan, implement and monitor our comprehensive financial planning approach.

Next Section - Use this opportunity to showcase the benefits your clients will experience because of this partnership (i.e., access to resources and expertise).

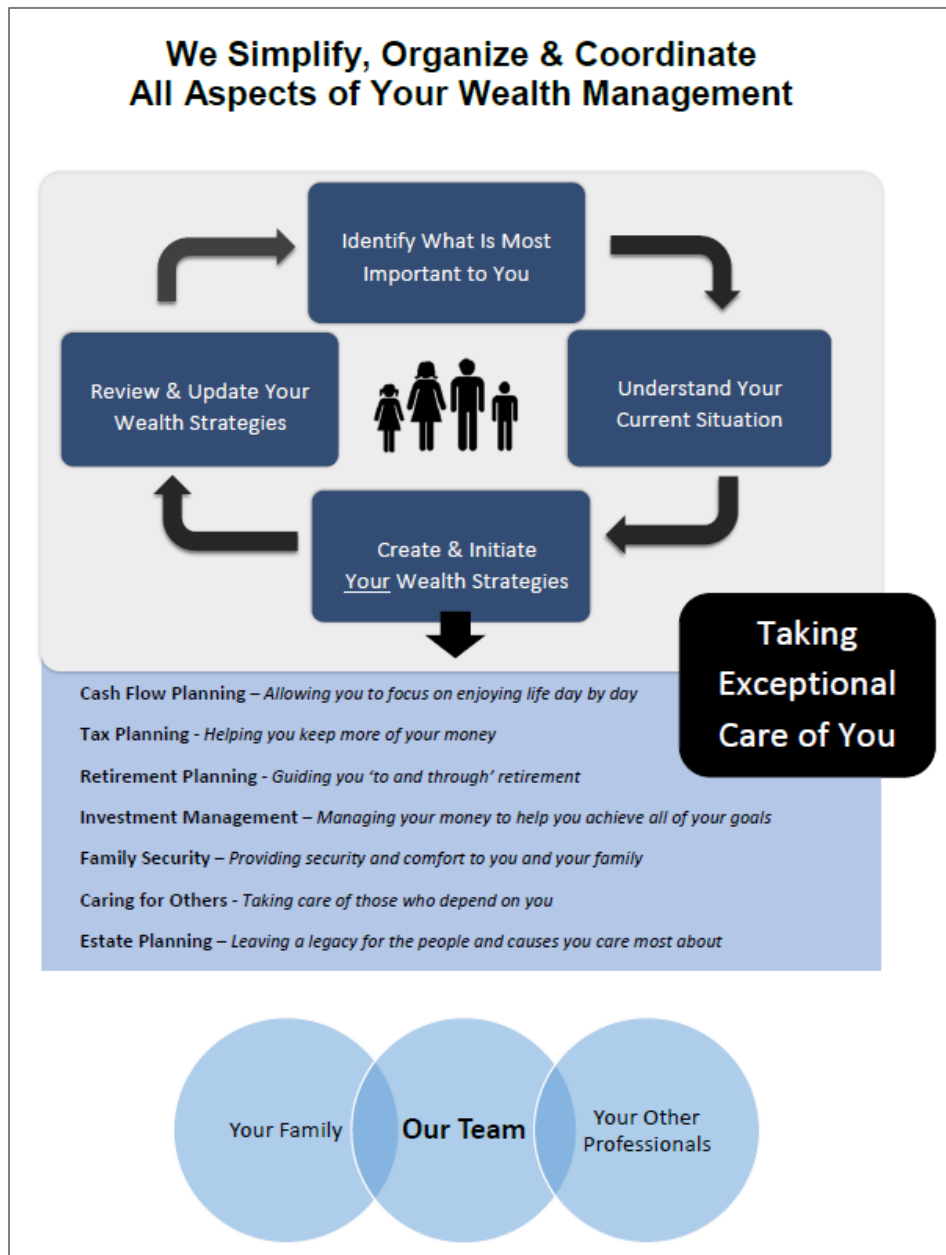
Sometimes the firm has approved content that may be suitable for this piece.

Keep this piece to one page.

Our Approach to Wealth Management

You may already have a graphic that illustrates your approach to comprehensive wealth management to clearly differentiate you from 'Investment Advisors'. If you have a simple-one pager available from your firm, that you believe is a good fit - include it. If you do not have access to a graphic, we have provided one which can be customized further. It can be accessed online as follows:

- Kit 7 - Wealth Management Graphic - Portrait [\[Word\]](#) or [\[PDF\]](#)
- Kit 7 - Wealth Management Graphic - Landscape [\[Word\]](#) or [\[PDF\]](#)



Introduction Kit Checklist

Step	Activity	Person Responsible	Completed on:
Confirm Your Introduction Kit Supplies are Available			
	Introduction Kit Folders		
	Business Cards		
	Quality Letterhead/Paper		
Update or Create Your Introduction Kit Contents			
	Book Photographer (if required for team photos)		
	Kit 1 Quality Card for Handwritten Message		
	Kit 2 Prospective Cover Letter Customized		
	Kit 3 Introduction to Team Customized		
	Kit 4 Advisor Biographies Completed		
	Kit 5 Our Partnership with You		
	Kit 6 Our Partnership with [Firm]		
	Kit 7 Our Approach to Financial Planning		
	Are there other suitable inclusions for your kit?		
Have all Content Compliance Approved			
	All content is compliance approved		
	Ensure it is print-ready (formatting)		
Introduction Kit Assembly			
	Pre-assemble 10-12 Introduction Kits		
	Customize Cover Letter as Required (Real Time)		
	Add Handwritten Note as Required (Real Time)		
	Handwrite Address & Courier (Real Time)		

The Procedures Manual

This is a great time to explore the **Procedures Manual** found in our program, which among other things contains a specific section on the **Team Branding** as follows:

- 6.1 Introduction Kit – Create & Update
- 6.2 Team Folders
- 6.3 Team Letterhead
- 6.4 Business Cards
- 6.5 Email Signatures
- 6.6 Website
- 6.7 Compliance Liaison
- 6.8 Branding & Consistency
- 6.9 LinkedIn
- 6.10 Other Process

Get Started!

The Procedures Manual is in a Word format which is easy to add to and edit.

We will refer to this resource throughout the program to encourage maximize use.

We believe it's important to carefully document all your core business activities to ensure quality control in all aspects of the client experience.

6.0 TEAM BRANDING

6.3 Team Letterhead

Date: [Enter Date Created or Edited]

Person Responsible: [Title of Person Responsible]

Frequency: Quarterly (Jan, April, July, October)

Process:

1. On the last business day of the month, check how much team branded letterhead are left in the Team Branding Cabinet.
2. Assess the current inventory by counting the number of boxes left:
 - a. If there are more than 2 boxes (approximately 1000 sheets), this process is complete and you will check again next month.
 - b. If there are fewer than 2 boxes, initiate a re-order.
3. Order folders online at ourmarketingdepartment.com using the following information:
 - a. User name: our team
 - b. Password: folders
 - c. Quantity = 4 boxes (500 sheets per box)
4. Set a trigger to follow up in three weeks if the letterhead has not yet arrived.
5. Once the letterhead arrives, place it in the Team Branding Cabinet.
6. Provide the hardcopy Invoice/Receipt to the individual who manages the team expenses.

Scripting: N/A

Resources:

The Team Branding Cabinet is located next to the Client Service Manager's desk.
Our Marketing Department Client Support Contact: 1-800-our-stuff.

- 📖 Use your CRM to fully automate as much of this process as possible.
- ➔ Use live links for instant access to intranet/internet sources for online manuals and procedures.

My Action Items & Notes

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a template for writing or drawing. The margins are consistent on all sides.