

*Getting Clients To
Come To Your Office*

Getting Clients To Come To Your Office

I believe that getting clients to come to your office saves time, helps with your positioning and can increase your revenue.

Fact: It saves huge amounts of time

It's been calculated that advisers who go to see their clients spend in the region of 3 months of the year in their car and therefore effectively spend just 9 months of the year working. Add in some genuine holidays and you may find you're working as little as 6-8 months per year. This is unproductive. When clients come to see you, they do the travelling. You work productively in your office until they arrive, spend your 90 minutes in the meeting and then go straight back to work, while they drive themselves home.

Fact: It helps with your positioning

If you want to be respected as a professional adviser, you have to act like one. Just as an accountant or solicitor would never see a client at home, nor should you. Having your own office helps overcome the intangibility of your advice and helps with one of your 4Ps – positioning. You look like a professional adviser and your ability to charge a premium price is enhanced because you create a strong first impression

Fact: You have your tools of trade

A carpenter comes to your home. In their tool bag are hammers, saws, nails, chisels and other tools needed to do their job effectively. When you meet with a client your tools of trade include:

- Technology
- Data
- Research
- Modelling software
- Paraplanners
- Administrators

Going to a client's home means some or all of these things are no longer available to you. It makes sense to have your tools of trade easily accessible

Bonus:

If you can find an office that is close to home, you can eliminate another waste of time – the commute.

Remember:

Someone that comes and speaks to you in your kitchen can never charge the same price as someone with professional premises.

Fact: You make more money

Saving time, improving your positioning and having your tools of trade to hand all combine to ensure you end up making more money.

Consider this data:

KEY VALUE DRIVER	PROFIT PER PRINCIPAL	PROFIT PER PRINCIPAL
USE YOUR OFFICES:		
Less than 50% of meetings on-site	£78,841	-
More than 50% of meetings on-site	£128,717	63%

Source: FP Advance Business Fitness Report

For businesses whose entire model is based on them going to the client, this change can be frightening, but the benefits far outweigh the risks. It sounds simple and obviously takes a little chutzpah, but culture change is possible, just by asking your clients to come to you.

But:

My client will dump me and go elsewhere. My office isn't fit to host clients. I like driving everywhere – it's fun.

Strategy: How To Convince Clients To Come To You

I believe that getting clients to come to your office saves time, helps with your positioning and can increase your revenue.

Step Two: Transition Existing Clients

Once you have set the precedent with new clients, it's time to start using a similar story with your existing clients. Here's a sample script:

You: "Hi Mr Client. I'm calling to make an appointment for your annual review meeting but this time I'd like you to come into my office. What's good day for you?"

Client: "But you usually come to see me." You: "I know Mr Client, but we've changed that this year for a couple of reasons. Our preference now is to see people in our offices, where we have all of our tools of trade at our fingertips, rather than at their homes or places of work. Unlike a plumber who comes to your home and brings their tools with them, we need easy access to our tools of trade in the form of data, research, individual technical expertise, technology and software, to enable us to provide you with the best possible service.

Secondly, it's also a time issue. We can no longer afford the travel time, so we've had to start billing clients extra for home visits. I thought under these circumstances, that you would prefer come to our offices. I'm happy to schedule a time that's convenient to you and book it as far in advance as you need to assist with arranging time off. What's a good day for you?"

You'll find that most clients will be happy with this reasoning.

Tip:

Have your administrator or PA make these calls – any clients that have a problem are referred to you to then decide if you will relent or stick to your guns.

Strategy: How To Convince Clients To Come To You

Go The Extra Mile

What about elderly clients, or those who live further away? Maybe you have clients who say it will be too expensive to come to you in the city where traffic is bad and parking is expensive. Or perhaps you're based outside of London, but have clients both in your local area as well as in London? Offer some incentives.

Parking

If your office has free parking, great. If not, strike a deal with a nearby parking station or give the client cash on the day to cover their parking. Paying £30 for parking is far cheaper than wasting 2 hours in travel time and the client will appreciate the gesture.

Refreshments

Often you'll find retired or elderly clients are happy to make it a day out. Scheduling your review meeting for the middle of the day and offering them lunch and a cuppa will keep everyone happy.

Keep it central

If you're based outside of London, rent some by-the-hour or by-the-day office space in Central London so you can see people away from their turf. Set up back-to-back meetings to maximise your time and so the clients do the travelling around London, not you.

Make it a day out

Broadway Financial Planning are based in the Cotswolds and encourage their clients to book a spa treatment at a nearby spa hotel after their annual review meeting. This makes the whole day a treat – after all, who couldn't do with a little more pampering?

If you're not in a location like the Cotswolds, you can simply offer to take your client out for lunch after the meeting (if they are an 'A' or 'B'), which makes it feel like a significant investment for the client in the relationship and their future.