



INVESTNET

6 Ways To Support Your Clients During Periods Of Market Volatility

In times of market volatility, investors need the ability to turn to a real person and ask the most human question: “What should I do?” This presents a valuable opportunity for you to fulfill the essential role of counselor, offering unified advice and insight to help your clients manage their emotions and their wealth on the path to achieving financial wellness.

As we continue to experience unprecedented market conditions, your clients will likely look to you for support, reassurance, and answers to their questions. With emotions running high, here are six ways you can engage with your clients and help them maintain perspective.

1 Convey a sense of calm.

Start with yourself! Clients will notice any anxiety you feel. Consider your non-verbal communication, both in your tone of voice and body language. Your confidence will help buoy your clients and encourage them to trust your guidance.

Take action:

- ✓ Before client calls or meetings, take a moment to relax and set your mental space. Take some deep breaths, go for a walk, stretch for a few minutes – whatever you need to do to center yourself.
- ✓ In conversations, pay attention to your rate of speech, breathing, and pitch. Speak slowly, clearly, and with confidence.
- ✓ Provide resources to help your clients understand what’s happening to their portfolios and what you can currently control.
- ✓ Remind your clients of the financial plan you have in place and the value of a long-term perspective. Explaining historical performance during similar seasons of market volatility may inspire confidence.

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Serve as their financial wellness coach.

One of the benefits of working with an advisor is having a real person to talk to, ask questions, share concerns, and discuss how the current market situation could impact their finances. Technology cannot replace a human connection. Fulfill the critical role of coach by helping your clients understand what's happening – both in the markets and their portfolios. Explain the plan you have in place, what you can control, and that long-term planning is designed to withstand short-term challenges.

This big-picture, relationship-focused approach to financial planning can help your clients understand how specific decisions can impact their finances and goals and help establish you as one of the first people they turn to for advice.

Take action:

- ✓ Provide perspective beyond your clients' portfolios and help answer big questions like, "Where am I going?" and, "What am I doing?"
- ✓ Help your clients understand the full scope of their financial lives – from planning, to protection, to lending – and that investments are just one component.
- ✓ Revisit your clients' financial plans. Remind them why you created the plan – to have a roadmap in place to help navigate all market conditions – even when it's difficult.
- ✓ Focus on your clients' goals and how you can continue to work together to achieve them.
- ✓ Help your clients manage their emotions, so they can avoid the bad decisions that may prevent them from achieving their goals.

3

Communicate proactively and consistently.

Your clients deserve proactive communication, so they don't need to wonder or worry about your support or their portfolios. They need reassurance and confidence, and they want you to tell them what they need to know. Consistent, repeatable, easy-to-understand messaging is important when times are tough. Make sure your entire team understands the messaging and communicates it the same way. Your clients will appreciate your foresight and your empathy.

Take action:

- ✓ Proactively keep in touch with your clients to encourage open lines of communication. It may also help to ask them how often they'd like to hear from you and what channel they prefer, personalizing your outreach to their needs.
- ✓ Develop and share a consistent core message, including positioning statements on various topics that your clients may ask about: volatility, the coronavirus, how your office plans to handle meetings, etc.
- ✓ Demonstrate empathy. Your clients may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious, and emotional. Market volatility may be impacting them in a variety of ways. Provide a listening ear and give them space to share what they're feeling. Your kindness and understanding can help them think more clearly.
- ✓ Organize an outbound call campaign to address market volatility and connect with clients as soon as possible.

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Provide multiple communication channels and a streamlined technology experience.

With people increasingly being asked to work from home – and to stay home as much as possible – you will need to find creative ways to leverage technology to stay in touch with your clients. For older clients, this may mean offering video conferencing options to maintain a face-to-face connection. For younger clients, who often want on-demand communication, this may require implementing more digital communication options, such as instant messaging or text messaging, as allowed by your compliance department.

Take action:

- ✓ Consider the communication options that will work best for you, your practice, and your clients: video conferencing, texting, calling, an online client portal, etc.
- ✓ Practice using any new tools internally before attempting to use them with clients to ensure a more seamless process.
- ✓ Make sure your cell phone number is in your signature and email contact settings.
- ✓ Be very clear upfront about the communication options you offer and how quickly someone can expect a reply, particularly if this varies based on the client's assets under management.
- ✓ Share virtual resources with your clients to help them stay informed and better understand the decisions you're making.

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Help your clients interpret the news and changes to their portfolios.

If your clients understand market volatility, it may ease their fears and help them feel more confident in the long-term plan you built together. Knowledge is power. Let them know that you can help them cut through the noise and potential misinformation, and focus on what's most important regarding the markets and their portfolios.

Take action:

- ✓ Remind them that even though they are seeing losses, they are not realizing those losses unless they sell.
- ✓ Use historical examples from similar market events to indicate how the market responded in the past and may respond in current or future scenarios.
- ✓ Remind your clients of the value of your online portal in sharing information and keeping them informed.

6 Offer your services for your clients' family members and friends.

Unfortunately, not all advisors do well during market volatility, leading some people to seek out new relationships. Others may not be working with an advisor and are now seeking a relationship to help educate them and build a plan for moving forward. Offer your team's services to your clients' family members and friends, who may be expressing fear and uncertainty about their finances. This will help to reinforce your relationship with existing clients and build a potential pipeline for the future.

Take action:

- ✓ Develop creative messaging to share on social media and with existing clients to encourage people to reach out to you for your guidance and expertise.
- ✓ Craft an email message that clients can forward to others who may be interested in speaking with you.
- ✓ Offer open webinars or conference calls that your clients and their family members and friends can join for your perspective on the markets and high-level advice. Consider promoting these events on your company's LinkedIn or Facebook pages, as allowed by your compliance department.



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