

Steps 4 - 6 of Anton Swanepoel's 10-step process of professional client engagement.

In this follow-up article we highlight the next three important steps. We'll cover the last few steps in an upcoming issue of *Glacier Weekly*.

4. Gathering client information

The objective of this exercise is to understand the client's personality, personal history, level of understanding of financial matters, current financial position, needs, objectives and life goals. All of these elements will change over the course of a person's lifetime. A thorough understanding of the client is the foundation on which trust is built.

Financial planning is a far more comprehensive process than advice that is purely focused on a financial product. As an example, asking the right questions to understand what the client's ideal retirement looks like, will enable you to design a strategy to help them achieve that vision.

As with the previous steps, gathering the required information needn't be a compliance exercise. See it as an opportunity to build trust and to show the client that you're seeking first to understand and to act in their best interests.

5. Establish and define the professional relationship with the client

A service agreement is established the moment you agree to perform a service on behalf of a client. Mutual understanding regarding what the client is expecting is important. The scope of the engagement (including responsibilities, terms, and remuneration) should be defined before any financial planning is provided.

Specific legal requirements in this regard can be found on page 65 of the eBook.

6. Conduct an analysis and prepare the client's proposal

This step involves the diagnoses of the client's circumstances and suitable recommendations to be implemented. A proposal is more than just a quote – it should outline:

- Evidence that you understand the client and their needs
- A compelling reason for the client to choose you
- Recommendations that will solve the client's specific needs
- Evidence of your ability to deliver on the proposal.

Further legal requirements can be found on page 81 of the eBook.

In a forthcoming issue, we'll focus on the last few steps in the process.

[Access the eBook](#)

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