

# The Advisor Approach: Cross-Selling by Fact-Finding

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Let's face it. Your clients don't want to feel like they're being sold to. However, when you trade in the checkered suit and take the role of a trusted advisor, sales and cross-sales are more likely to occur naturally.

It's a combination of asking the right questions and remaining focused on your clients' needs. Not only does the advisor approach increase your value as an agent, it also opens doors for new cross-selling opportunities!

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## Why Take on the Advisory Role?

Few seniors meet with insurance agents because they want to buy something. What they really want is sound advice they can trust. They want to feel comfortable calling you with questions and they look to you as the expert. Walk into that meeting with the mindset of an advisor, and your clients won't feel like they're being pressured to buy a thing.

Once your client looks to you as a trusted advisor, you'll find plenty of opportunities for additional sales. Never force the sale, though. Often, it's as simple as mentioning a product and coming back to it at a future appointment. Your focus should always be on building a good relationship with your client while fact-finding to discover their needs.

## How Can You Implement This Insurance Sales Strategy?

### Meet in Person

It's always preferable to talk face-to-face, especially while you're still building a relationship. Further, meeting in person when a sale is not imminent goes a long way. Don't forget to stay in contact, too. Periodic newsletters are a great way to continually build your client relationships.

### Do Your Homework

Prepare a list of questions prior to meeting your client and know what answers will open doors to what sales. Asking about their family history of cancer or heart disease could lead to the sale of a critical illness plan. Similarly, asking about concerns related to funeral costs could bring about a final expense plan sale.

## **Listen Attentively**

To make a truly informed recommendation to your client, you need to know as many facts about them as possible. When your client is comfortable with you, they'll be far more open about their feelings on key decisions and common concerns. As your relationship grows with clients, you'll find that [cross-selling opportunities](#) will present themselves. Ask yourself what their main concerns are. Costs left to family members if they pass? Depleting savings should they be confined to a nursing home? Picking up on subtle cues will help you identify which products your client is most likely to be interested in.

## **Focus on Satisfying Needs**

Rather than laser-focusing on the product you want to sell, steer the conversation around the relevant needs that product would satisfy for your client. For example, "So, you want to make sure your family isn't left with unexpected costs when you pass away. If they received \$10,000, do you think that would cover any funeral costs?" It might seem like an insignificant distinction, but wording it this way keeps the consultative tone of an advisor.

## **Don't Have the Solution? Refer!**

You might not have all the answers and that's OK. Remember that if you're not qualified to give the advice your client is seeking, don't offer it. Instead, reach out to local business partners. It's always wise to have a local financial advisor to whom you can refer clients to. Just do your research and make sure the company treats their clients properly. Be diligent with your referrals because the quality of their services will come back on you. And if you send enough business their way, chances are, they'll be more than happy to return the favor.

## **Go Forth and Advise!**

Now that you have all the tools you need to act as an advisor, put these recommendations to the test. Focus on building a great relationship with your clients while fact-finding to discover their needs. Cross-selling success is simply the natural result.