



*Causes and Solutions
– For Too Much Work*

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When there's too much work going on you need to get real. It's not going to change by itself. You need to make a change somewhere in your business if you want to see a different outcome.

Here are three areas to look at initially:



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a.) What are you doing for your clients?

As financial planners, we're sometimes too concerned about being good value and so we over-engineer our service to clients.

In one firm I spoke to recently, they mentioned they're doing two reviews a year for most clients. And although the half-yearly review meeting is a pared-down version of the annual review, it still takes work.

For the vast majority of clients, an annual review meeting is enough.

If you're worried that 12 months is a long time between drinks in terms of relationship and contact (and it is), create a client communication strategy that's scalable for all your clients.

That takes some time and effort to create, but with all the time you and your team will save on those half-yearly reviews, you'll be miles in front.

Look for other examples

Are there other examples you can think of in your business where you might be "doing too much"?

Remember, once a client is on board the one thing they value most is talking to you (usually at the annual review). All the written gumpf you've convinced yourself you need to give to clients after a review meeting is usually stuff they don't read anyway,

Revisit Month 14: Creating A Killer Review Service if you want some concrete examples of how to reduce the reports and paper. Taking action on this issue not only saves you and your team a lot of time preparing stuff, but it actually improves the client experience too, so it's a win/win.

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b.) How many clients do you have?

If you're really stretched, it might be time to consider whether you need to let some clients go.

I know it's a tough issue, so I don't suggest it lightly.

The starting question is not, "Who can I let go?"

The starting question is "Who do I love to serve?"

You want a client base that's full of people you've chosen to focus your limited time, energy, and financial resources on.

When you ask this question of yourself you need to have in mind what type of business you're trying to build over the next 5-10 years. Are you serving clients that are no longer suitable for the business you are today and for the business you're working to become in the future?

Remember, your business is like a car park. You've only got so many spaces to fill.

One adviser can serve between 50 and 150 clients. And for most financial planners, somewhere around 100 clients is it.

I know it's difficult deciding who to let go of, but so is running at 110% capacity and having yourself or your team burnout.

There are ways to elegantly disengage from some clients that can still fit with your own moral or ethical compass. I cover every possible way to do this in Month 6: Your Business Is Like A Car Park. Check it out now if too many clients is an issue for you.

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c.) Have you got your capacity right?

It's possible that your challenges could be a staffing and capacity issue.

How can you tell?

Take a look at your profitability ratios which I covered in detail in Month 10: Understanding Your Financial Ratios.

Your overhead percentage should be around 35% (or maybe as high as 40% - 45% if you employ a full-time Practice Manager). Overhead is all other expenses after the advisers or selling owner-directors get paid. So it includes, all other staff wages, rent, technology and telephony, printing and stationery, marketing etc. (Everything).

What's your overhead percentage?

If it's well above the recommended thresholds then you might not be in a position to just "throw more bodies at it". In which case you might return to the first two possible causes I've outlined.

If you do have the ability to add more support, consider adding a shadow adviser to support you, or more paraplanning and administration support. Check out Month 25: Growth Strategies. I've got two videos in there that can help you with the shadow adviser concept and also how to create more capacity in your team.

Summary

In most situations, I'd be expecting you to have to address all three of these issues to get the results you're after. That is:

- ▷ What you do for clients
- ▷ How many clients you have
- ▷ And capacity/staffing

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