

# Financial Service/Brokerage Houses

## Overview

Like accounting firms, financial services firms have both corporate and individual clients.

Most brokers we're familiar with will work with individual investors, handling their retirement portfolio and individual investments. Brokers are typically part of larger firms such as Morgan Stanley/Smith Barney, Edward Jones or Montgomery Janney. You may find smaller brokers who have broken off and handle financial planning and management on their own.

Larger financial services firms will manage 401k plans for companies, life insurance programs and other investment vehicles. These firms actively cold call the CFO's and finance people at larger corporations to develop new business. They aren't called 'salespeople' so adjust your initial questions from "How many local salespeople do you have?" to something more akin to "How many people do you have responsible for developing new business?"

Both styles of brokerage firms will have client services staff that mainly are in-office and handle trades and execution or other minor details for clients. These people are not considered business development staff.

## Why They Buy Tickets

New brokers working with individuals will develop an initial client base through friends and family and through cold-calling. Once they are established, the best tool for developing new business is through referrals from existing clients. An existing client will make an introduction of a friend or family member looking for some financial help. The key to getting new business is the new prospect's comfort level with the broker. That comfort level will grow through an out-of-office bonding activity like a dinner or sporting event. The broker could invite the existing client and the person they referred to a game to get to know each other better in a casual environment.

Larger services firms targeting corporations will do much more cold-calling and relationship building. The larger firms don't have salespeople by name. They most like refer to their business development people as Vice Presidents. These VP's are tasked with aggressively courting new business and need tools to develop relationships.

Brokers will also receive a healthy amount of referrals from lawyers and accountants. Those two professions help individuals with estate planning and taxes and many times identify investment needs for clients. Like any business, people refer others only to people they know and like. Therefore, it's valuable for brokers to develop and maintain relationships with these key referral sources.

## Decision Makers – Who to Talk to...

The Branch Manager of a larger national brokerage office is usually not going to spend money to provide tools for client entertainment. Individual brokers usually fund the ticket purchase out of their own pocket. However, the Branch Manager is still a good place to start to explain how you can help the brokers grow their business. He/she can turn you on to a few

brokers in the office that are good candidates to purchase. You need to find someone who really believes in sports tickets as a relationship tool. If your team is using Full Menu Marketing, you may start them with a smaller plan. Or, they could be an internal champion to rally other brokers together to share in a bigger ticket package.

Once you work your way in to an office with many brokers' look for a way to have a meeting where all the brokers get together so you can pitch them all at once. If you have an internal champion who already is using your tickets to help boost business, they can be a testimonial at that meeting on their success.