

A Key to Client Retention: Consider Charitable Planning



Retaining clients is a cornerstone of long-term business success, no matter the profession or industry. As the saying goes, keeping an existing client—and earning additional work from that client—is far easier and more cost-effective than securing a new client. For professionals who work in estate, tax, and financial planning, this principle becomes especially important during one of the most delicate stages of engagement: the period following a client's death.

Attorneys, accountants, and financial advisors know quite well that after a client passes away, many planning strategies are set in motion and, simultaneously, emotions run high and families are adjusting to loss. This combination can make it challenging to transition relationships to the next generation.

The statistics underscore just how steep this challenge can be. Indeed, some sources indicate that fewer than [20%](#) of heirs continue working with their parents' advisor after inheriting assets.

The answer, of course, is to build relationships with the client's children long before the estate becomes active. Advisors can employ many thoughtful methods—inviting children to appropriate meetings, sending personal notes, or offering career guidance. Yet few topics open the door quite as meaningfully as philanthropy. For most families, inheritances represent more than financial transfers; they embody values, purpose, and the story of how the family built its resources. Conversations about charitable giving naturally lead to discussions about legacy, priorities, and shared commitments across generations.

This is where the Chester County Community Foundation can be especially valuable. Our team helps advisors create opportunities for clients and their children to explore [philanthropy](#) together. You can encourage families to establish simple, effective giving vehicles through the Community Foundation—such as a donor-advised fund, designated fund, or field-of-interest fund—that make charitable participation accessible to every generation. You can also connect them with our family-focused services, including research on favorite causes, curated site visits to local nonprofits, and educational conversations about community needs and charitable giving strategies. We also provide materials to help families understand tax-efficient giving, such as the advantages of contributing appreciated stock to avoid capital gains tax.

What's more, estate planning and wealth advisors frequently ask us to facilitate family discussions so younger generations can understand and carry forward the causes their parents and grandparents have long supported, while also identifying new areas that reflect their own interests or values. These conversations are powerful. They deepen family identity, strengthen intergenerational ties, and help advisors stay connected to the entire family for years to come.

Any thoughtful engagement with a client's next generation improves the chances of maintaining the relationship across transitions. But philanthropy, in particular, provides a uniquely meaningful avenue to build trust, spark conversation, and ensure continuity—keeping your clients' families engaged with you long after wealth transfers from one generation to the next.

Please reach out anytime! We look forward to helping you keep your clients for many years to come!

For more information, contact the Chester County Community Foundation:

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The team at the Chester County Community Foundation is a resource and sounding board as you serve your philanthropic clients. We understand the charitable side of the equation and are happy to serve as a secondary source as you manage the primary relationship with your clients. This newsletter is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended as legal, accounting, or financial planning advice.