

# Boundaries: Use Telephone Answering Protocol

**Date:** September 21, 2021

**Person Responsible:** Receptionist or Client Service Associate

**Frequency:** All incoming calls must be answered in 2 rings.

## Inbound Call Protocol

1. Answer the phone: *"Epsilon Financial Services. This is \_\_\_\_\_. May I help you?"*
2. If the caller asks for the advisor, say: *"Advisor is not available / unavailable right now. May I let her know who called, and is there anything I can help you with?"*
  - a. The word 'unavailable' covers many situations such as, the Advisor being out of the office, meeting with other clients, preparing for an upcoming meeting, golfing with a prospect, etc. Instead of having to double check before you respond to a client or risk misinforming them – this will cover it – 'unavailable'.
3. If the caller identifies himself/herself, use the verbiage found below. The correct verbiage depends on their classification. If you are unsure of the client's classification, quickly look it up in your Contact Management System.

### Client is Top Tier

- If the client is an AAA, AA, A (Top Tier) client, and you can indeed help them without the call having to go to the advisor, proceed to help them!
- If you cannot help with the issue/question or the client indicates that they would like to speak to the Advisor, take notes (if applicable) and then say:  
*"I know [ADVISOR] would like to speak with you. She will be able to return your call during/after [TIME]. Does that time work for you? What is the best number for [ADVISOR] to reach you at during this time?"*

### Client is not Top Tier

- If it is a B, C or D client, and you can indeed help them without the call having to go to the advisor, proceed to help them!
- If you cannot help with the issue/question, take notes and then say:
  - *"I know [ADVISOR] would like to speak with you. She will be able to return your call later today or at the very latest, tomorrow. What is the best number for [ADVISOR] to reach you at during this time?"*

### For ALL Clients

- If any client wants to leave a message say: *"It would be my pleasure."* Take the message and give [ADVISOR] the information when appropriate to do so.
  - If the caller wants to use voice mail say, *"Please hold for a moment while I transfer you to [ADVISOR's] voice mail."*
4. Always let the Advisor know who called either by email or written note and what the expected follow up is as it is appropriate to do so.

**Scripts:** See *scripts* in process outlined above

**Resources:** CRM to access client classification.

## Other Things to Remember about Implementing this Approach

- Some Professionals will prefer to have you always take messages so they can focus on their tasks at hand without interruption. Others will prefer you transfer the caller to them if they are not on their phone. Still, there are Professionals who do not want to be interrupted by incoming calls unless it is a specific client or group of clients. Please make sure you know their preferences.
- Client Service Associates handle all non-investment details like address changes, money transfers, wholesalers, etc., not the Professional(s).
- If a client is calling to schedule an appointment to see the Professional, unless it is agreed by the Professional ahead of time, you should not schedule the appointment--- defer the scheduling of the appointment to the Client Service Associate, by asking the client to hold the line, and notifying the Client Service Associate.
- If the Professional is away (i.e., at a conference or on holiday) it is important to let the client know when they are returning so they can expect to have a response at or about that time. Again, in many cases someone on the team will be able to help the client and it is important they continue to feel well looked after. If it is a case of high importance and urgency, you can either contact the Professional (if this is something the Professional has requested and permits) *or* have another Professional (the one who is covering for the Professional during their absence - where applicable) reach out to help the client immediately.
- Always, always, always answer the phone in a professional manner. Be pleasant (even if the caller is not), treat everyone with respect, and at all times be friendly (remember to smile!)