
4S™ Workbook

**A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE
CLIENT COMMUNICATION**



4S™ Framework



Supplements

Dimensional slides, videos, articles, and other materials can strengthen the message and enhance a client's learning experience.

Scripts

Short, memorable talking points and specific phrases can help you guide client conversations and explain complex topics while maintaining a consistent message.

Stories

Sharing stories, examples, and analogies can help clients emotionally connect with the message, and stories can be adapted for different client personas.

Sketches

A simple drawing can help clients make sense of data, ideas, or relationships.

Stories

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Story Structure

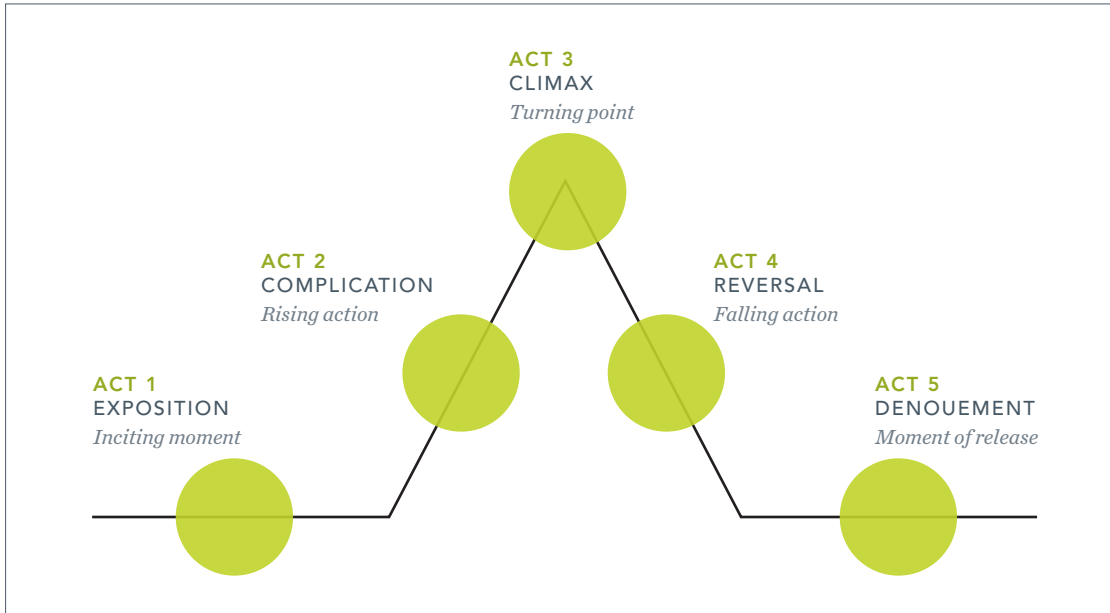
WHAT STORY ARE YOU TELLING? _____

WHO ARE THE MAIN CHARACTERS? _____

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE STORY SET? _____

WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE? _____

WHY DOES THIS STORY MATTER? _____



ACT 1—EXPOSITION _____

ACT 2—COMPLICATION _____

ACT 3—CLIMAX _____

ACT 4—REVERSAL _____

ACT 5—DENOUEMENT _____

Sketches

A simple drawing can appeal to preferred communication styles and help clients visualize data, ideas, or relationships through universal images.

The Emotions of Investing

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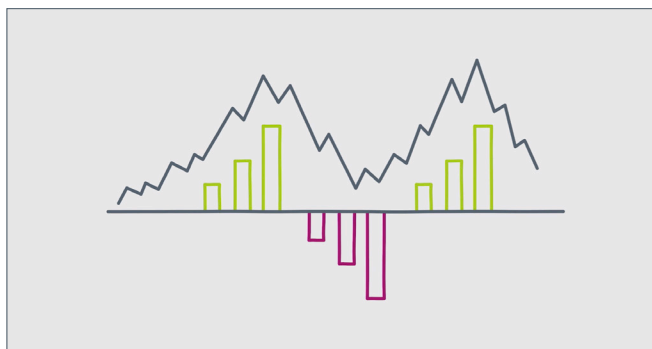


BUILD THE STORY IN STAGES:

Markets go up and down;
so do emotions

- When we invest, our emotions naturally go up and down. This means sometimes we are happy, and at other times we are unhappy.
- These emotions usually follow the path of markets, up and down.

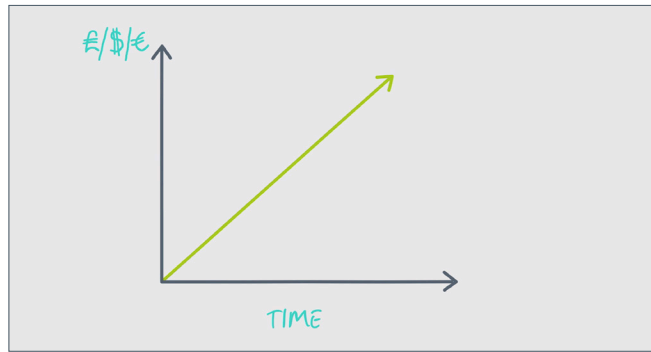
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Should we act on our emotions?

- Unfortunately, some people act on these emotions when they think about their money, and that means they tend to add more money to markets when they are rising and sell down when they fall.
- This behavior may be damaging to wealth creation because it is a repeated process of buying high and selling low.

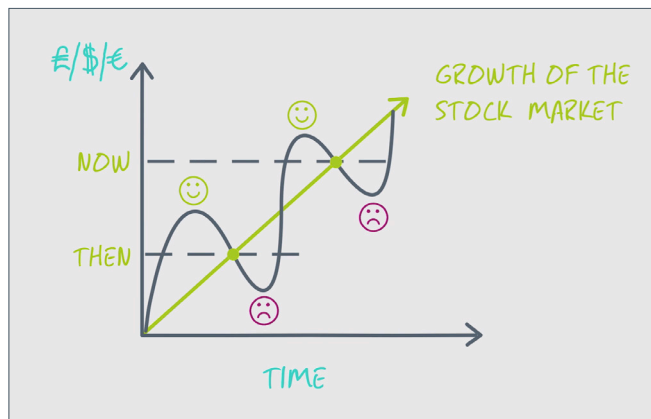
3.



Reframing the investment horizon

- It is worth taking the time to reframe the long-term nature of true investing in our minds.
- If we consider the lifetime of an investment program and net wealth, we should remember that we are actually investing along this upwardly sloping line of capitalism, which has delivered positive long-term results to investors in the past despite short-term dips.

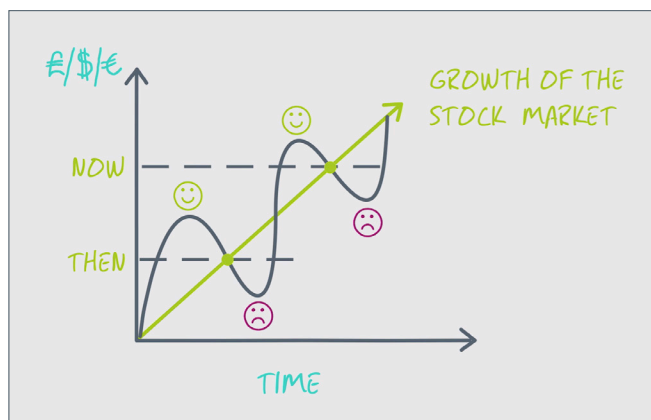
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Markets will rise and fall

- Along the way, markets will rise and fall.
- Therefore, investors may still at times feel happy and at other times feel unhappy about their portfolio.

5.



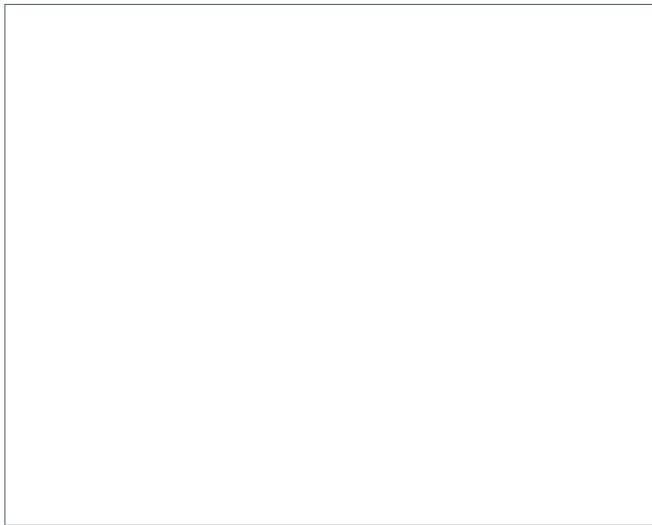
There is positive wealth creation over time

- If, during a period of short-term negative performance, we stand back and measure the wealth creation we have enjoyed from markets over time, it is often the case that we are wealthier now than when we started (even if it doesn't feel like it).

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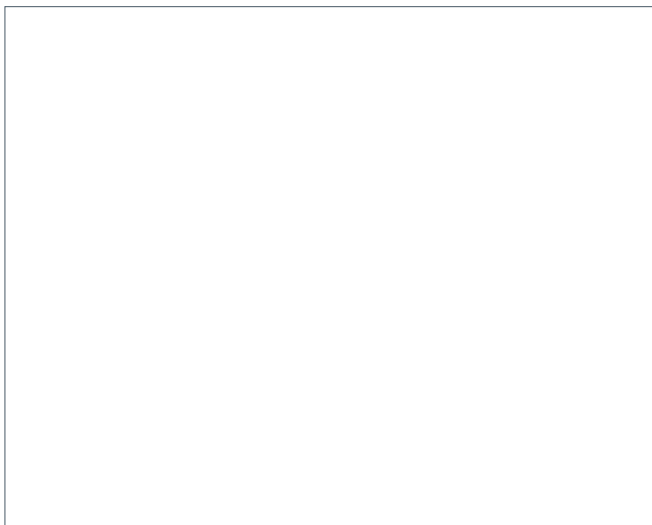
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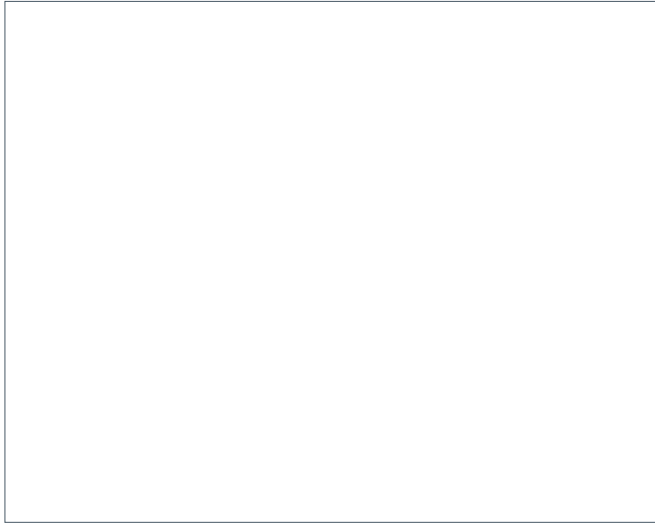
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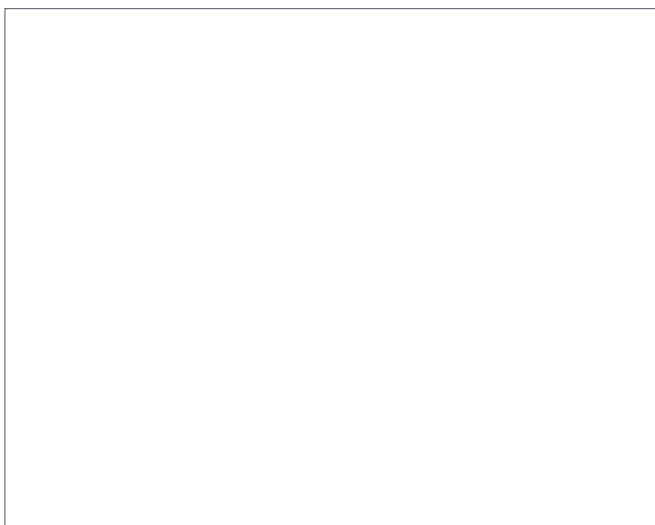
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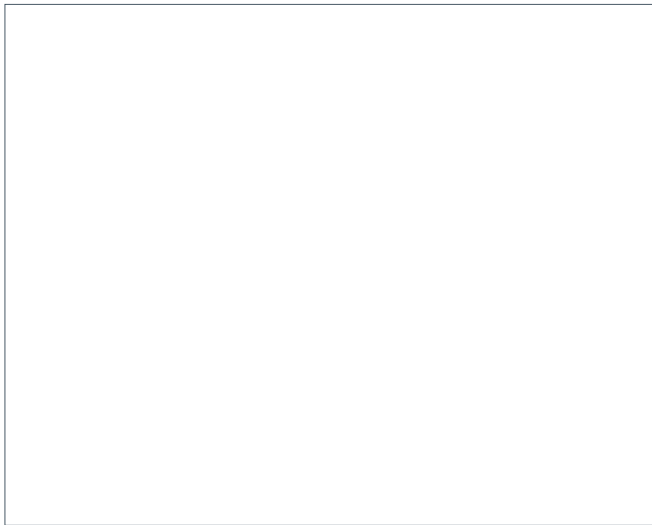
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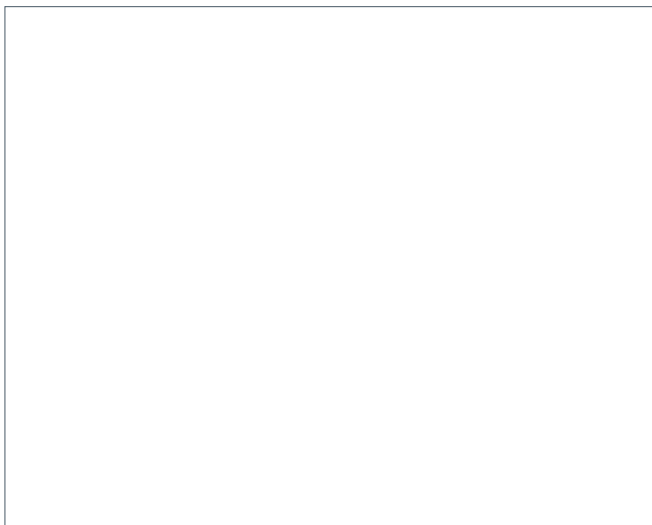
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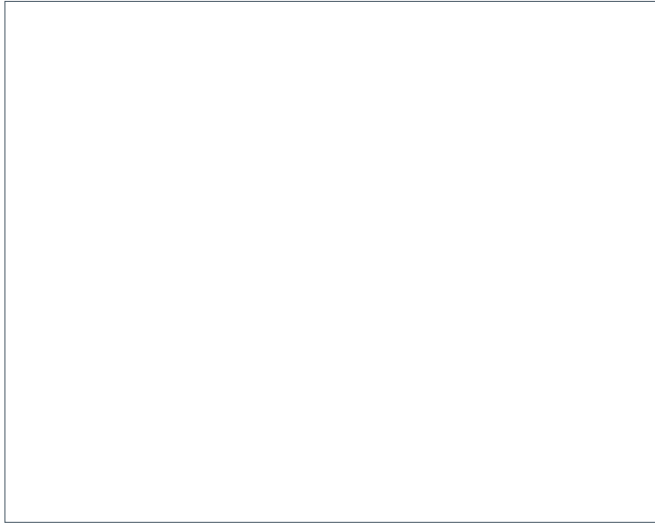


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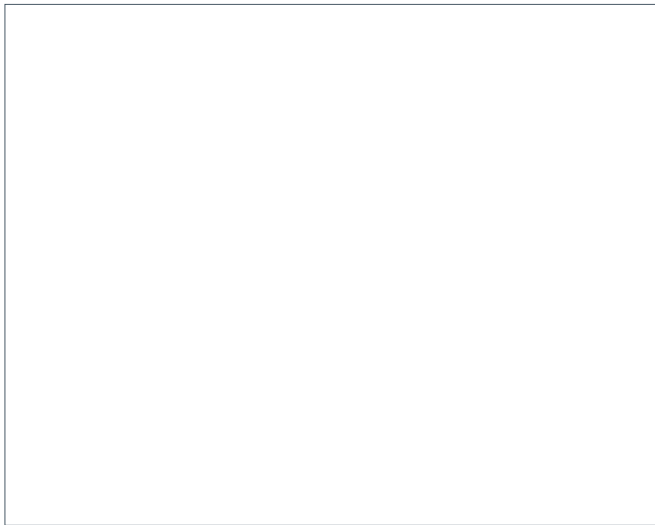
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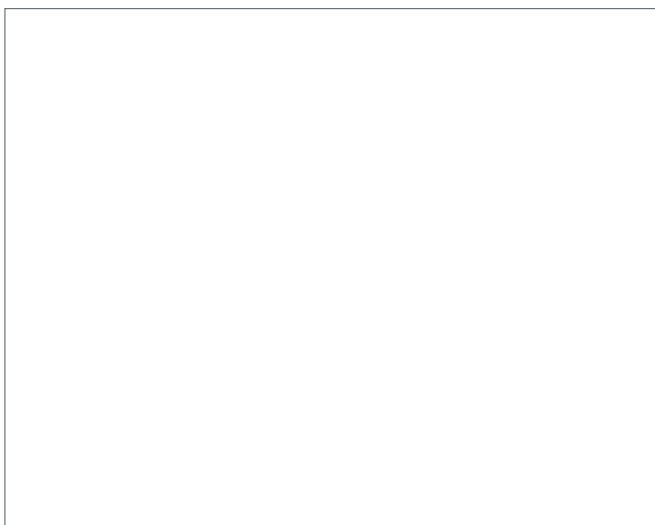
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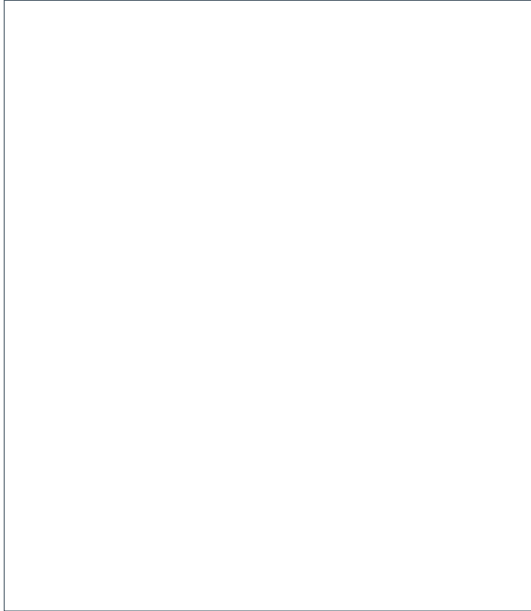
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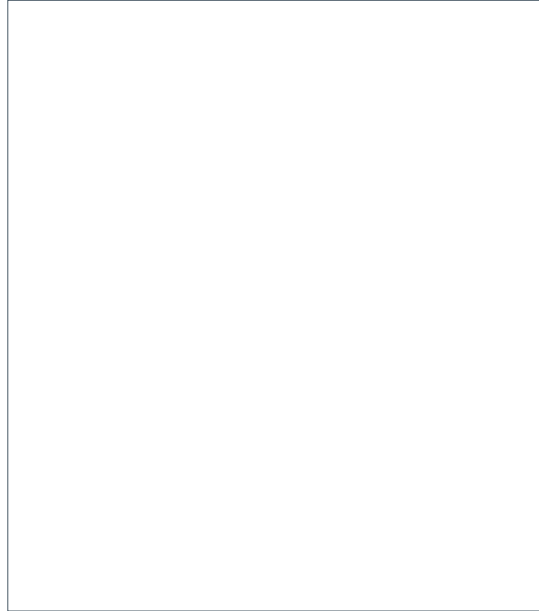
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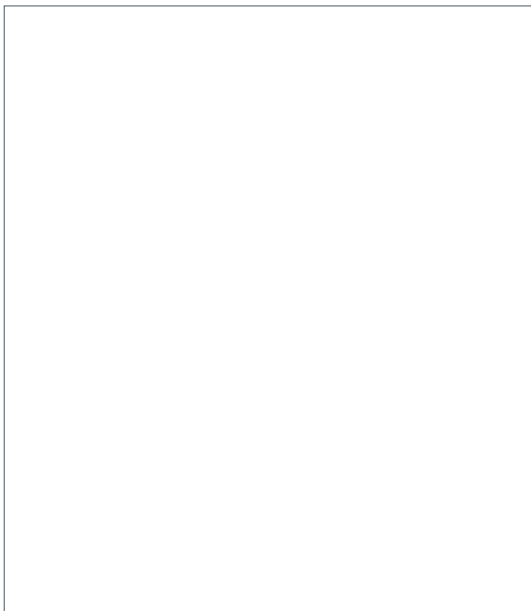
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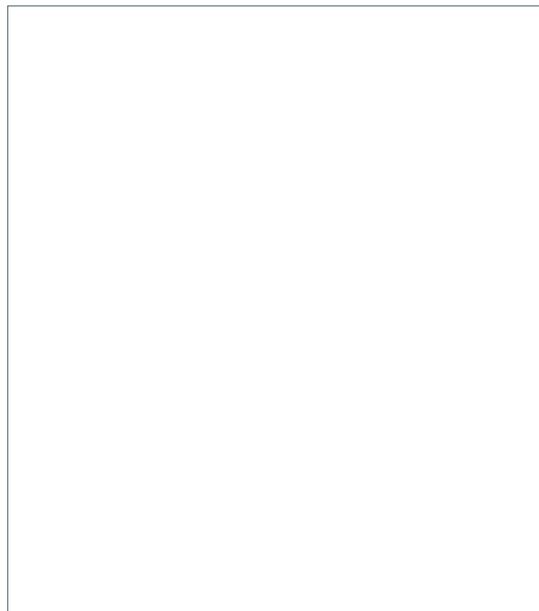
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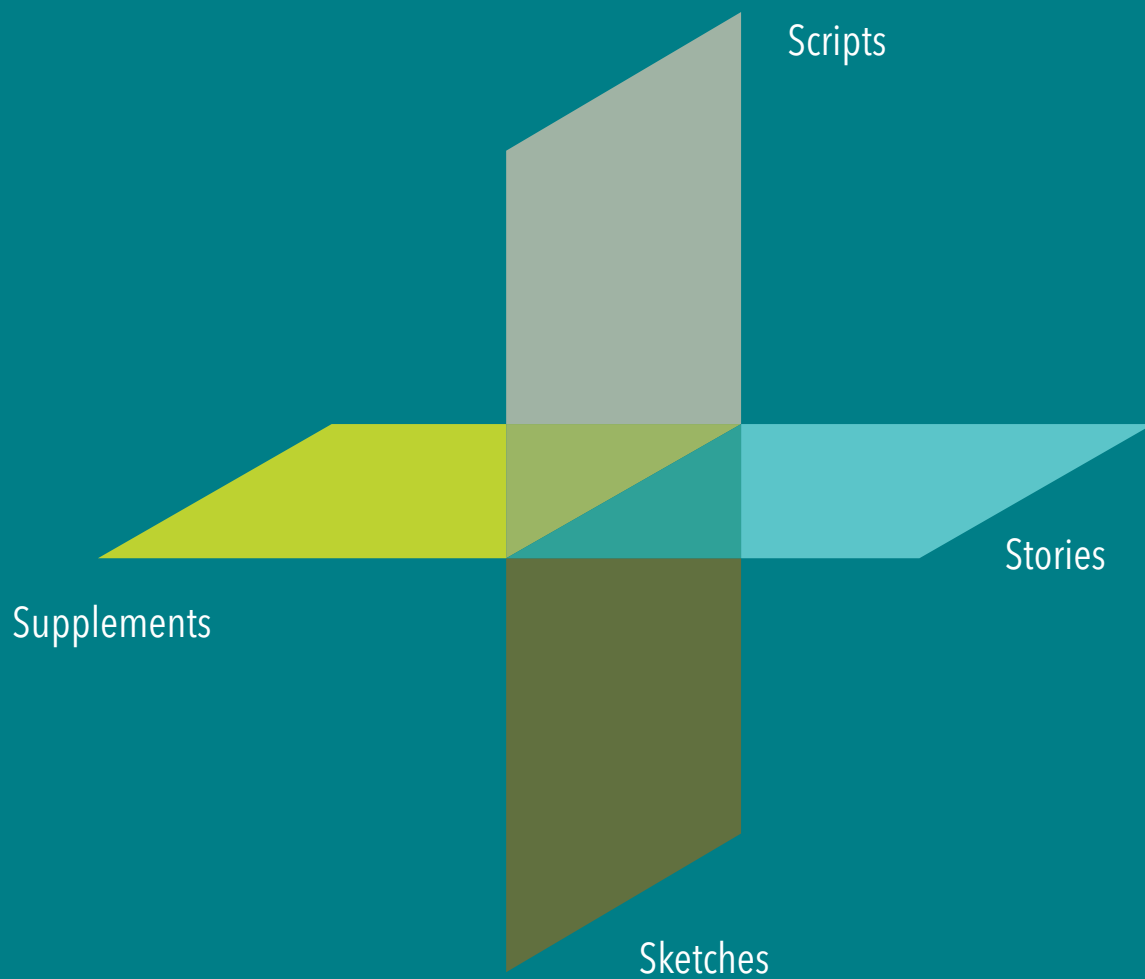
WRITTEN MATERIALS



OTHER



To learn more about how Dimensional can help your business, contact your Dimensional representative or visit us online at dimensional.com.



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4S™ Workshop Planning and Execution Guide

A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE
CLIENT COMMUNICATION



For decades, Dimensional has worked closely with advisors and other investment professionals to offer perspective on the great ideas in finance and deliver compelling methods for sharing these insights.

They look to us for guidance in developing creative, informative solutions to help them answer difficult questions from their clients and articulate Dimensional's investment approach. Demand for our messaging support continues to grow.

We have developed the *4S Framework for Effective Client Communication* to help professionals have more meaningful conversations with their clients. Using this system, they can combine scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements to customize their interactions with clients.

4S™ Framework



Supplements

Dimensional slides, videos, articles, and other materials can strengthen the message and enhance a client's learning experience.

Scripts

Short, memorable talking points and specific phrases can help you guide client conversations and explain complex topics while maintaining a consistent message.

Stories

Sharing stories, examples, and analogies can help clients emotionally connect with the message, and stories can be adapted for different client personas.

Sketches

A simple drawing can appeal to different communication styles and help clients visualize data, ideas, or relationships.

“In theory, we all know the importance of clear, crisp communications. But the reality is that we need periodic reminders of the tools and processes required to achieve this. The concise nature of this communications session was perfect in that regard.”

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

Value for Clients

The 4S Framework offers insight into how Dimensional thinks about and communicates key investment concepts. The framework is meant to serve as a toolkit that helps users leverage their own expertise to strengthen the effectiveness and relatability of their client communications. The system also establishes a consistent approach to communication across firms and enables an investment professional to spend more quality time with clients and prospects.

Value for Dimensional

The framework enhances messaging consistency, helps streamline client communications, and provides internal training focused on investment principles and client concerns. The framework of scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements also creates a vehicle documenting new ways of effectively communicating and sharing these ideas across the firm.

After you work through this guide and its resources, we hope you feel empowered and equipped to confidently facilitate these sessions with clients.

4S™ Workshop Overview

What is a 4S Workshop?

It is a messaging session led by a Dimensional Regional Director and designed to educate investment professionals on leveraging the 4S Framework. Workshops are typically hosted in the participating advisory firm's office, a third-party event space, or Dimensional facility, and can last anywhere from 2–4 hours. The sessions blend structured presentation materials with interactive topic modules designed to foster collaboration and creativity.

What is the desired outcome?

After completing a 4S Workshop, participants should:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the 4S Framework, including the theory behind scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements, and the use of these components in effective communication.
- Have more confidence to lead deeper conversations and respond to common questions.
- Know how to leverage Dimensional's world-class content and resources.
- Be prepared to apply the framework to an expanding list of topics.

Who should participate?

The workshop is appropriate for all firms working with Dimensional, as well as our own employees involved in client servicing. To narrow the list of prospective firms, consider those that have:

- Expressed a desire to improve their responses to client questions and concerns.
- Shown interest in establishing consistent communication across the organization.
- Experienced rapid expansion and/or hiring.
- Recently gone through acquisitions or mergers.
- Moved a large number of junior staff into more client-facing roles.

Why this format?

The format positions Dimensional as a subject matter expert on certain topics, while providing flexibility to address the unique communication needs of each participating firm. We provide attendees with 4S resources for immediate application as well as training to help them develop their own technique and custom content over time. The interactive nature of the sessions encourages dialogue between the speaker and individuals, and across the group, resulting in higher participation, creativity, and learning.

What is the role of the opening presentation?

The opening presentation helps establish the rationale driving the 4S Framework. The facilitator describes communication challenges and introduces the components (scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements) from the context of communications theory and history. This introduction sets the stage for applying the technique to specific client questions (or topics) during the interactive sessions.

What is a 4S topic module?

A module features a question that may arise in client meetings and provides a map for using scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements to answer it. The modules reflect the theory and techniques covered in the workshop and provide resources for tailoring the message for clients.

The topics covered in the workshop should be relevant to the participating firm and encourage meaningful discussions on using 4S techniques. These modules are available in the 4S Framework collection page on MyDimensional.com.

Sample Topics:

- The Value of Advice
- Stock Market Conditions
- Global Diversification
- Managing the "Crisis of the Day"
- Investment Performance
- Why Dimensional Investing?

How do you work through the topics?

The facilitating RD walks through a preselected topic module to demonstrate using scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements in the 4S Framework and help participants refine their message and practice their technique. After the RD introduces the topic, the interactive exercise generally follows this sequence:

Individual Reflection (5 minutes*): Participants reflect on the topic, make a few notes, and think of ways to translate their own personal experience and expertise into the 4S method.

Small Group Breakouts (15 minutes): If room layout permits, participants gather in small groups of 4–8 people. During the topic presentation, they should have time to share ideas or best practices and review key takeaways.

Large Group Discussion (20 minutes): The facilitator should encourage audience participation by asking questions and requesting feedback. The group should be large enough to include multiple perspectives but small enough to encourage strong participation.

Debrief the discussion by asking:

- What did you learn?
- Were there any surprises?
- What was useful or interesting about the discussion?

Role-Play Exercise (20 minutes): The facilitator can lead the exercise or have participants organize in pairs. One person acts as the investment professional, and the other person (or facilitator) plays the client role. The investment professional applies the 4S Framework to address the topic, gaining hands-on experience in advancing the conversation, while the client role-player acts naturally through the discourse, responding with comments or questions, and provides feedback after the exercise.

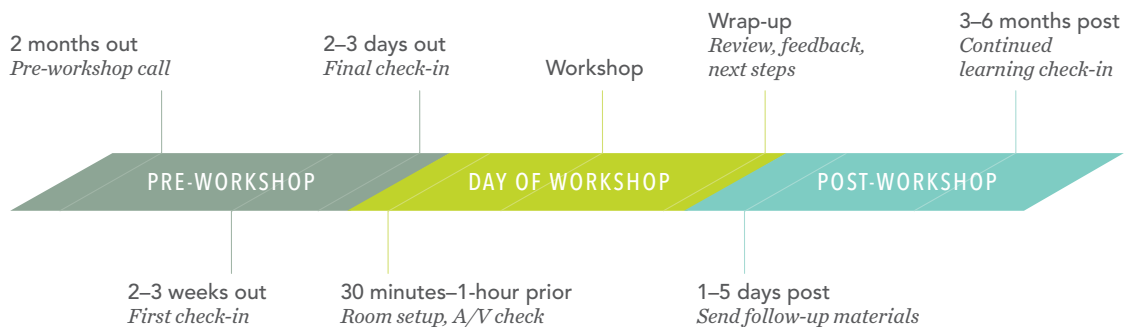
* Times will vary based on workshop length.

Planning a 4S™ Workshop

Workshops offer detailed, personalized training on the 4S communications approach. The sessions explore relevant communications theory and demonstrate ways to apply 4S techniques to address specific topics using supporting materials. These workshops are most successful when they are interactive and provide enough time for individual reflection, group discussion, and role playing.

No two sessions are alike, so structure your agenda, presentation, interactive exercises, and topics to best address participant needs and expectations. Use the following guide to develop a custom workshop plan for your client:

Timeline



Preparation and Planning

STEP 1: Hold a pre-meeting call (2 months prior)

Schedule a call with firm principals, head of employee training, or other decision makers who will be involved in the effort.

Review key issues during the call:

- Why the firm has requested a 4S Workshop or should consider one
- Topics to cover: Discuss possible topics or ask firm to survey staff and provide a list. Gather more topics than you can cover in the workshop and prioritize them.
- Number of attendees and mix of roles
- Allotted time (2 to 4 hours, depending on staff availability and interest)
- Proposed agenda
- Room layout
- Dimensional materials (worksheets, supplements)
- Resources needed on site (A/V equipment, projector/screen, flip charts, pens, etc.)
- Breakfast and/or lunch plans

Resources Needed

- Large screen and high-quality projector (if applicable)
- Appropriate workstation set up for each participant
- Flip charts (minimum 2)
- Participant packets
- Supporting resources
- Presentation deck
- Audio facilities in room or portable speaker for video files.

Optimal Time-Topic Ratios

2 Hours: 1–2 Topics

3 Hours: 3–4 Topics

4 Hours: 4–5 Topics

Additional topics may be covered, time permitting

STEP 2: Interim Preparation

- Check in with the firm contact 2–3 weeks before the workshop to confirm selected topics and review logistics.
- Review topics and script key points to cover during the interactive session.
- Confirm that participants are doing their pre-work to prepare for the workshop. (Examples: make a list of challenging client questions, identify story ideas to develop, and reproduce sketches used with clients.)
- Contact the firm 2–3 days before the workshop to ensure that materials are ready and answer any questions.
- Prepare workshop materials (copies of participant packets, supporting resources, etc.)



“Delivering highly personalized solutions is highly connected to listening. Good advice starts with honest conversations.”

DAVID BOOTH
Executive Chairman and Founder

Day of and During Workshop

STEP 3: Setup

- Arrive early and assess the room layout, seating, climate, lighting, and potential visual obstacles. Confirm the setting will encourage participation.
- Check assigned seating and determine small-group seating for breakout sessions (as applicable).
- Check equipment (A/V, electronics, sketch boards, etc.).
- Confirm that workbooks and supplemental materials are available for everyone.

STEP 4: Workshop/Presentation

- Welcome attendees and explain the context and expected benefits of the workshop.
- Confirm everyone has the materials they need.
- Check in throughout the presentation and during activities.

STEP 5: Wrap-up

- Outline tangible next steps and encourage participants to continue developing their 4S communication techniques and personalized content.
- Ask for initial feedback and answer questions.
- Review website resources (4S Framework collection page, topic modules, and supplements).
- Confirm all participants have access to Dimensional's client website.

After Workshop

STEP 6: Follow-up

- Email 4S resource links and one-page summaries to participants.
- Check in with firm contact, and request event feedback.
- Propose a plan to help participants continue developing their 4S approach over the following 3–6 months.
- Check in with firm contact for an update on progress, including new ideas or content arising from the use of the 4S Framework.

Sample Agendas

4-Hour Sample Workshop Agenda

8:00–8:30 am	Breakfast
8:30–10:00 am	Introduce 4S Framework and conduct interactive session for Topic 1: Why this approach to investing?
8:30–9:00 am	Introduction and Topic 1 Setup
9:00–9:05 am	Individual Reflection
9:05–9:20 am	Small Group Breakout
9:20–9:40 am	Large Group Discussion
9:40–10:00 am	Role Play
10:00–11:00 am	Topic 2: What is the value of an advisor?
11:00–11:05 am	Break
11:05 am–12:00 pm	Topic 3: What do we do about the “crisis of the day”?

2.5-Hour Sample Workshop Agenda

8:30–10:00 am	Introduce 4S Framework and conduct interactive session for Topic 1: Why this approach to investing?
10:00–11:00 am	Topic 2: What is the value of an advisor?

Workshop Best Practices

Adapt your approach based on the group and selected topics. Although every event is different, a workshop involves these five elements:

1) The Opening

- Set up the space to encourage interaction. Ensure that all participants can see and hear others. This dynamic enhances the learning experience as much as the workshop content.
- Set the right tone from the moment participants arrive. Welcome them, be friendly, and help them feel comfortable and excited about the workshop.
- Set proper expectations by explaining who you are and the workshop's goals.
- Set the stage by encouraging participants to get involved and interact as soon as possible.

2) The Presentation

- Break up your presentation with interactive activities that encourage participants to reflect, think outside the box, and collaborate.
- Leverage different forms of content throughout the presentation (i.e., videos, stories, sketches, and handouts).
- Use plain language. Start with the simple and move to the complex, especially when introducing new ideas. Check in frequently to confirm that everyone understands the message. Take questions before moving to a new topic or next key point.
- Save time for questions after your presentation, but also welcome the audience to ask questions as they arise.
- On conclusion, summarize your three most important points to improve audience retention.

3) Demonstrations

- Use personal examples (whenever possible) to bring the concepts to life. Illustrate how communicators can model the techniques they are describing.
- When using a smartboard or flip chart, write slowly in block letters and use multiple colors to better detail your narrative. For example, use black as a baseline, blue to make supporting points, green for positive points, and red for negative points.
- Practice your sketches before the presentation, and effectively use white space, lines, word spacing, and other elements.

“We’ve always had a culture of ideas. People can share good ideas and execute on them—and if the ideas are good, they become part of our business and culture.”

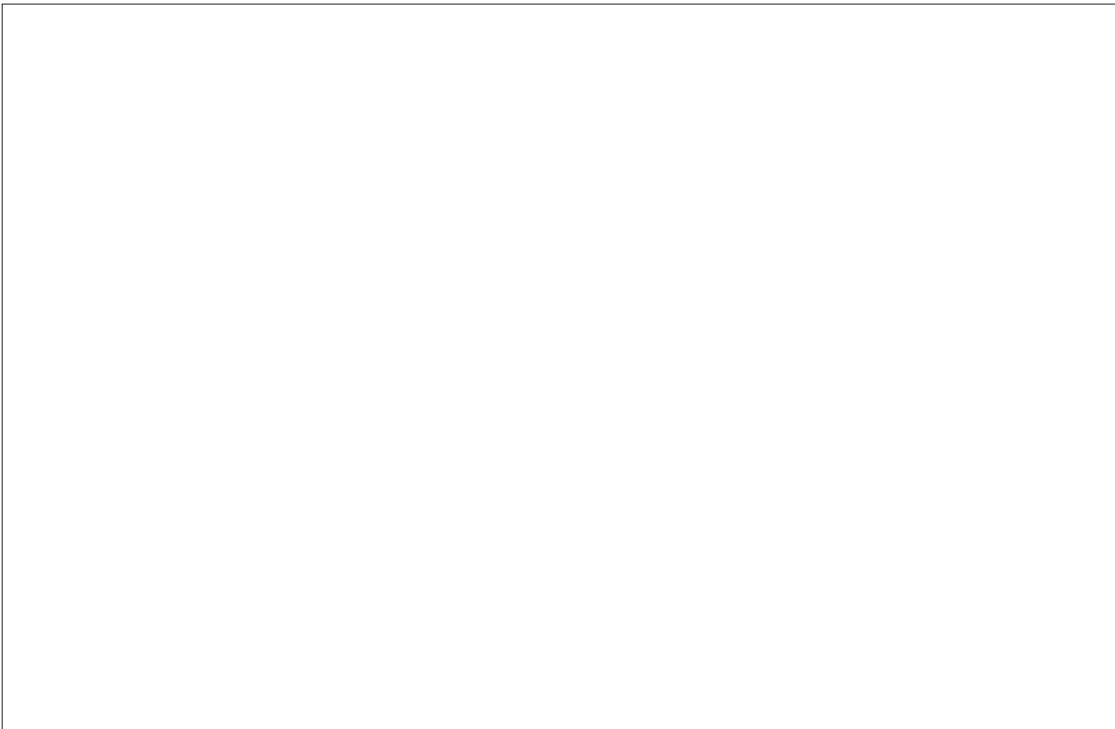
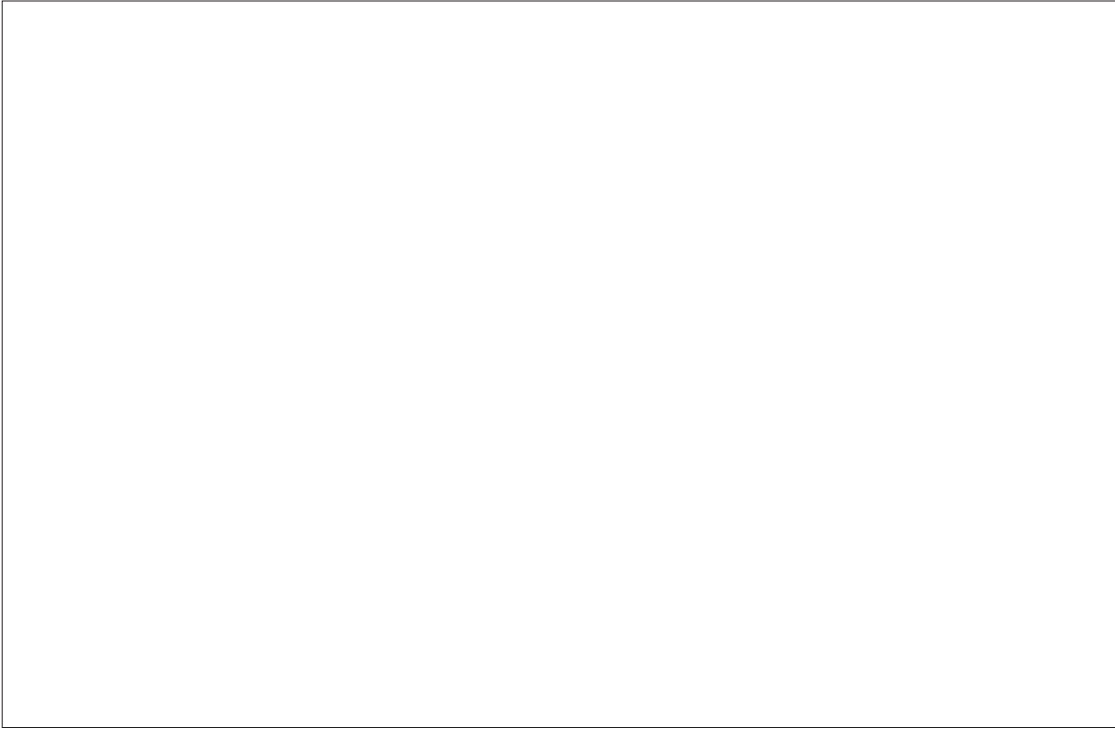
DAVE BUTLER

4) Interactive activities

- Explain why you are doing the activity and what you hope they will gain from it.
- Give clear instructions, including how much time is allowed for an activity.
- Post instructions for quick and easy reference.
- Observe group behavior to confirm everyone understands the task.
- Be available to answer questions, but avoid too much contact with groups during the activity.
- Be positive and offer encouragement and support. If needed, step in to facilitate certain steps to maintain the pace within a group.
- Update participants on remaining time, and promptly end the activity when time is up.
- Allow time for questions.
- Debrief by asking the group to reflect on the activity and share their thoughts.
- Finish by summarizing the learning points to reinforce the objective of the activity.

5) Closing the workshop

- Briefly recap the workshop’s purpose and context, and state how the objectives have been achieved.
- Make time for feedback and questions.
- Ask participants to share their thoughts on the workshop—what went well, what could be improved, and why. The feedback can inform future workshops and next steps for the group.
- Thank everyone, share contact information, and explain next steps.



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| EUROPE
| London, Amsterdam, Berlin

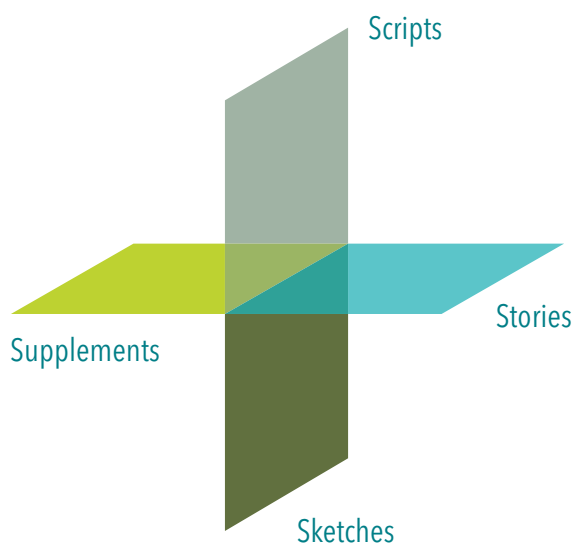
| ASIA PACIFIC
| Sydney, Melbourne, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo

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4S™ Framework for Effective Client Communication

Dimensional has developed the 4S Framework to help you personalize your client communication using scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements. You can combine these elements to have more meaningful and impactful conversations, which can enhance the time spent with clients and improve the consistency of your firm's message.



The 4S Workshop

Facilitated by your Dimensional representative, the workshop offers detailed, personalized training on mastering the 4S Framework. The session can be held at your office or offsite and lasts from two to four hours. The format blends structured presentation materials with interactive topic modules designed to foster individual reflection, group discussion, and role playing. Topics may include:

- The Value of Advice
- Stock Market Conditions
- Global Diversification
- Managing the "Crisis of the Day"
- Investment Performance
- Why Dimensional Investing?

Workshop Objectives

- Understand the 4S Framework in the context of communications theory and best practices.
- Learn how to combine the 4S components for greater messaging impact and retention.
- Build confidence to lead client conversations and respond to questions.
- Discover how to better leverage Dimensional content and resources.

Workshop Sample Agendas

2.5-Hour Sample Workshop Agenda

8:30–10:00 am	Introduce 4S Framework and conduct interactive session for Topic 1: Why this approach to investing?
10:00–11:00 am	Topic 2: What is the value of an advisor?

4-Hour Sample Workshop Agenda

8:00–8:30 am	Breakfast
8:30–10:00 am	Introduce 4S Framework and conduct interactive session for Topic 1: Why this approach to investing?
10:00–11:00 am	Topic 2: What is the value of an advisor?
11:00–11:05 am	Break
11:05 am–12:00 pm	Topic 3: What do we do about the "crisis of the day"?

US:

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SCRIPTS, STORIES, SKETCHES, SUPPLEMENTS

4S™ Framework for Effective Client Communication

4S Framework Topics

Clients have different communication styles, levels of technical understanding, and concerns about their wealth.

We have developed the 4S Framework to help you personalize your client interactions using scripts, stories, sketches, and supplements. You can combine these distinct elements in ways that appeal to each client's perspective.

The topics below offer examples of the 4S Framework in client communication. Use them to guide your conversations and to develop and refine your approach.

Visit our [Dimensional Events](#) page to view upcoming communications workshops. To arrange 4S training customized for your team, please contact your Regional Director.



4S Framework Topics

MULTIFORMAT | PROFESSIONAL
4S FRAMEWORK

Stock Market Conditions

Stock returns are unpredictable. Yet, investors may be reluctant to put money to work in the market when it is at a record high or has recently declined by a relatively large percentage. Use these 4S elements to highlight the challenges with market timing, encourage appropriate expectations of returns, and reinforce a...

MULTIFORMAT | PROFESSIONAL
4S FRAMEWORK

Crisis of the Day

Investors may become anxious about news on the economy and markets. In extreme cases, they may be tempted to change course on their investment approach. Consider using these 4S elements to reinforce a balanced perspective on high-profile events.

MULTIFORMAT | PROFESSIONAL
4S FRAMEWORK

Value of Advice

Many times, clients want to understand the value they are receiving for the fees they are paying. Learn how to use the 4S Framework to explain an advisor's crucial role in each client's financial journey and highlight the value of objective, client-focused advice.

MULTIFORMAT | PROFESSIONAL
4S FRAMEWORK

Global Diversification

Clients may question the benefit of holding foreign assets. This may stem from their home country market's recent strong performance relative to other markets, or may simply reflect a preference for investments in local, recognizable companies. Use these 4S elements to communicate the potential...

MULTIFORMAT | INTERNAL
4S FRAMEWORK

Internal Training Resources

Gain a deeper knowledge of the 4S Framework and learn how to effectively conduct a communications workshop for financial professionals.

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