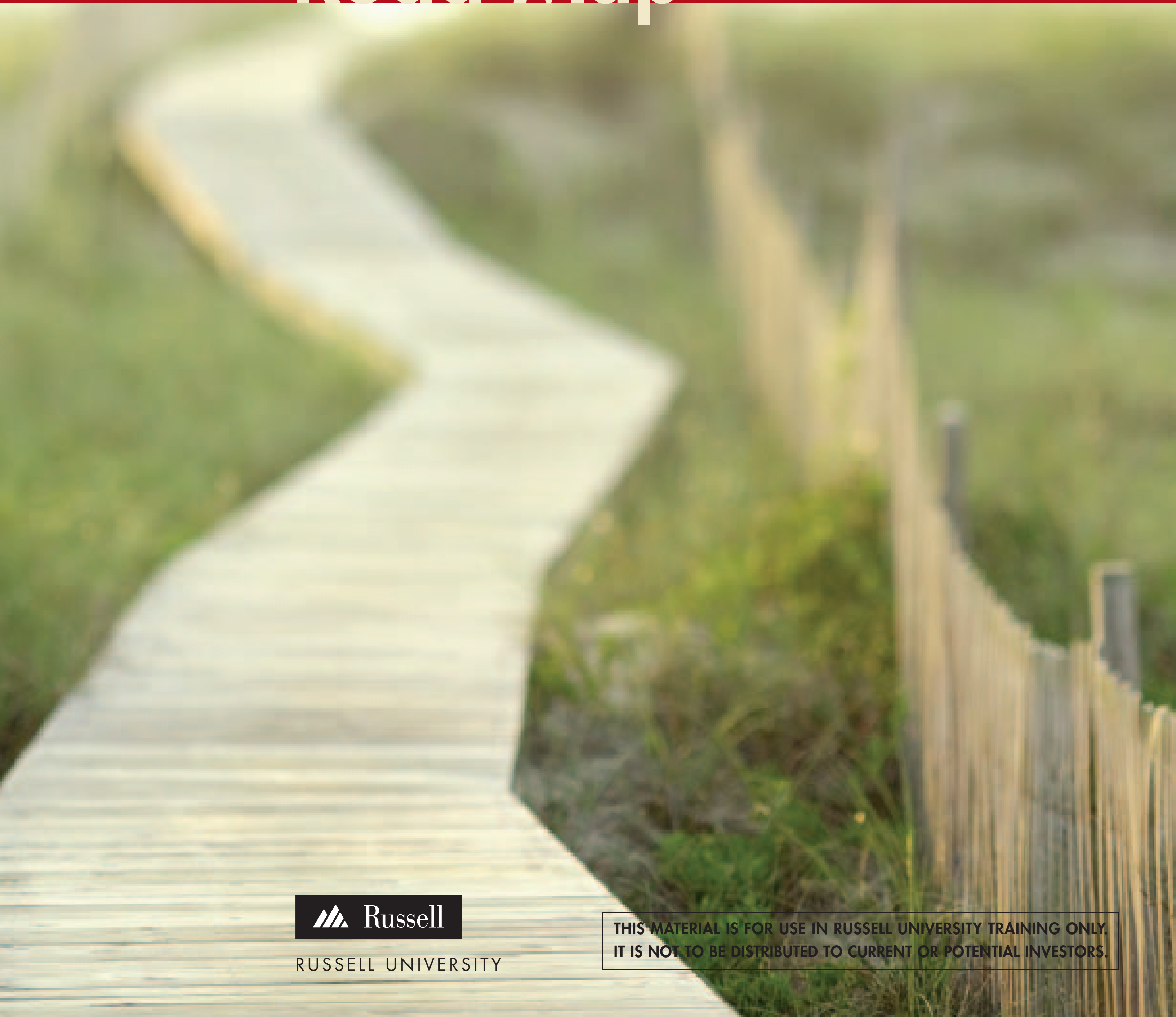
STRATEGIC PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Client Engagement **Road Map**



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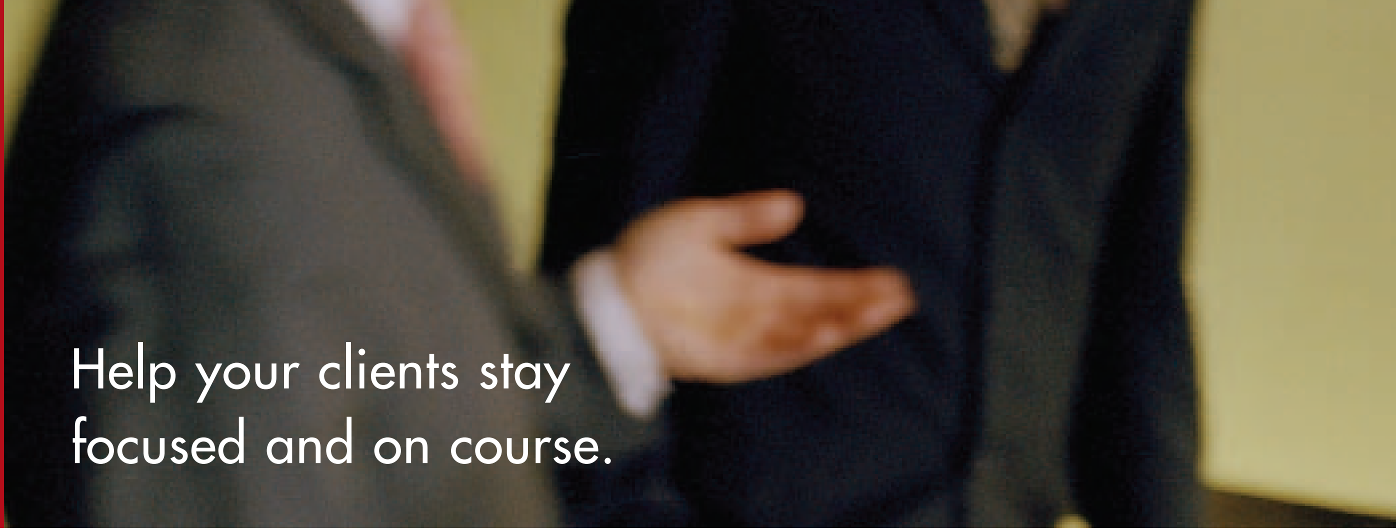
A BLUEPRINT FOR CHARTING YOUR CLIENTS' MILESTONES



Help your clients stay focused and on course.

One of your biggest challenges as a financial professional is to help your clients stay focused and on course. Despite your best efforts, they sometimes struggle to remember the valuable guidance you have given them. No matter how strong the message, clients can be easily distracted and diverted. They are inclined to make emotional, sometimes rash, decisions based upon what is happening right now, losing sight of where they have been or where it is they desire to go.

A solution to this problem is to provide them with a road map, a Client Engagement Road Map. Generally, clients know where they want to go, they just don't know the steps needed and which direction to head. The Client Engagement Road Map is a simple, yet profound, interactive tool that shows them where they have been and the steps you are taking to help them on their journey.

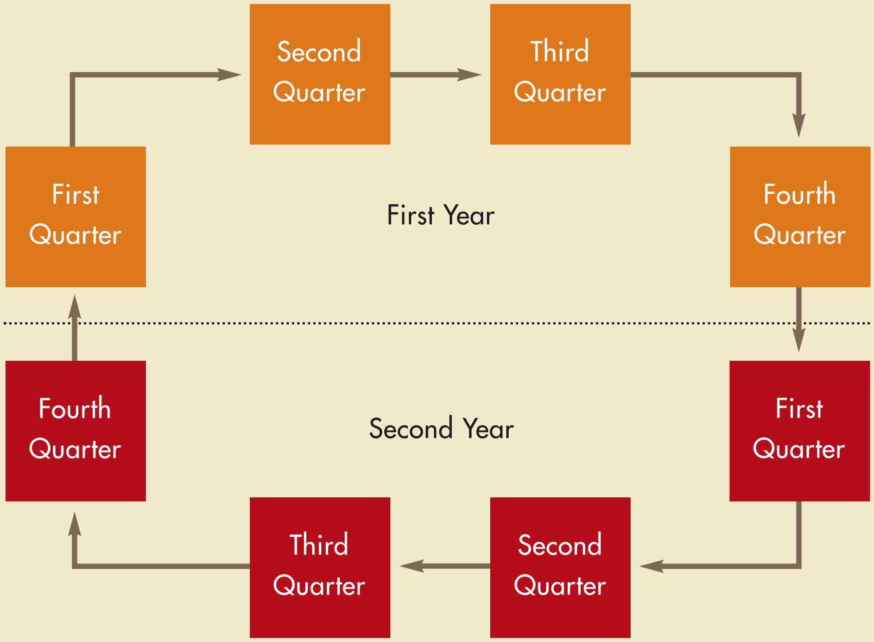
Effective implementation of the Client Engagement Road Map will result in the following:

- *Offer effective charting of your client's key planning and investment issues.*
- *Help you maintain strategic focus on each client and their unique goals and circumstances.*
- *Visibly illustrate the value you provide to clients.*
- *Provide structure for ongoing communication with your clients.*
- *Transform client investment reviews into a wider examination of their total financial picture.*
- *Spur ongoing discussion about client financial goals and set expectations about ongoing interaction between you and your clients.*
- *Pinpoint planning areas that require additional resources such as estate and tax planning.*

Get Acquainted

(3 STEPS)

Sample Client Engagement Road Map



FUNDAMENTAL ROAD MAP MILESTONES

The first step in familiarizing yourself with the Client Engagement Road Map is to understand the various milestones on the road map and the dialogue that should be centered around each of them. The following is a list of the fundamental road map milestones:

Goals Review

It is important to review your client's long-term financial goals as well as any issues that they stressed as important. The long-term goals could consist of adequate retirement funding or creating an estate plan. Other goals may be more pressing, such as college tuition for a child or a down payment on a new residence. The goals review focuses on big picture items.

Road Map Review

This review addresses topics from the previous quarter and provides an update of what was added based upon those discussions. The road map review is used to highlight and draw attention to the steps in the planning process. As in the previous example, if a client's long-term goal is estate planning, steps in the process would include the referral to a qualified estate planning attorney and drafting of documents. These are items that you review and highlight in the road map review.

Investment Review

This is an opportunity to review the investment solutions that you have implemented for your client. These items include a brief market review and performance or product review. The most critical component of the investment review is discussion of how the performance relates and impacts their overall goals.

Insurance Review

If you are a licensed insurance agent, you will want to include an annual insurance review. If you are not a licensed agent, you'll want to make sure that your clients are having annual reviews with their representative. Review the role insurance plays in protecting their income and their family or business in the result of death or disability.

Asset Allocation

Asset allocation plays the largest role in your client's long-term returns. We recommend discussing asset allocation and portfolio rebalancing on a regular basis. As part of this dialogue, consider using an objective risk profiling tool to review risk tolerance as well as establish the strategic parameters for rebalancing.

Step 1

Sculpting/Molding the Road Map

The second step is going beyond the fundamental milestones and beginning to sculpt and mold the road map around your client's unique circumstances. The additional items can range from basic college savings to a more detailed dialogue on capital markets. There is no limit to what can be included as part of the road map. The items will hinge upon your client's situation and planning needs as well as their overall interests.

It is important to note that the Client Engagement Road Map is an overview of the needs of your client. It does not imply that you provide all of the services referenced. The most effective delivery method is teaming with other leading professionals in the areas of insurance planning, estate planning and tax planning. By referring them to other experts, you are creating a vital network of specialists that can address all of their planning needs.

The following is a brief list of planning topics that might be appropriate given your client's unique circumstances

- *Estate planning*
- *Tax planning*
- *Asset allocation*
- *Charitable giving*
- *Wills and trusts*
- *Employee benefits*
- *Business planning*
- *Capital markets*
- *College savings*
- *Beneficiary review*
- *Distribution strategies*
- *Business continuation*
- *Aging parents*
- *Long-term care insurance*
- *Planning for disability*
- *Client satisfaction survey*
- *Family trusts*
- *Alternative investment products*

Step 2

Practice

The third step is to construct a road map for yourself. Beginning with the first quarter, complete the road map as is if you were the client. Start by including the fundamental milestones referenced in Step One and then begin to mold the road map around your situation. Consider the sample topics in Step Two a starting point when adding these additional items. After you have constructed your personal road map, have one or more members of your staff go through the same exercise in order to gain familiarity with the tool.

After completing these three steps (fundamentals, sculpting/molding, practice), you will begin to see how the road map can be used in a comprehensive and dynamic way with your clients.

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Step 3

NEW CLIENTS

The process for getting new prospects on the Client Engagement Road Map is similar to the practice exercise that you completed. After meeting with the prospect and conducting your fact finding, take a blank template and complete it with the prospect's name and relevant milestones. Your staff will then be able to construct a draft based upon the template and your notes. At your next meeting you can present a formalized Client Engagement Road Map and offer to make any alterations based upon your dialogue.

When working with new clients, the first two quarters of your road map may contain items such as:

- *Data gathering*
- *New account forms*
- *Risk tolerance*
- *Long-term goals*
- *Asset transfers*
- *Insurance review*
- *Planning analysis*
- *Implementation*
- *Additional professional resources*

EXISTING CLIENTS

The process for putting existing clients on the Client Engagement Road Map is simple and seamless. You have the background information on their goals and objectives in your client files and simply need to extract it and prepare a draft for your next client meeting. You can present the road map as a new tool to make sure your clients are getting comprehensive reviews of their planning that include other leading professionals when necessary.

An existing client's road map will not have the transition and data gathering tasks that come with a new client. Instead, consider implementing an educational component each quarter and address the issue of building a team of professional to complement the guidance you provide.

Deliverable: Putting Clients on the Road Map

Implementation
and Tracking

The Client Engagement Road Map and the milestones included provide you and your team a clear plan of record and work agenda. It not only serves as a roadmap for your clients, but for your staff as well. With minimal effort, they will be in tune with current planning issues and items that need action or follow-up.

Once you have your initial road map completed for a client, you can then update it as your clients circumstances change. As each quarter progresses you can file the road map so that at all times you have a documented history of your client's goals and planning issues. You can also use the road map in meeting preparation or for follow-up on outstanding items that may have been referred out of your office.

The most critical piece of implementation and tracking is to make sure that each item on the roadmap is completed or addressed. Avoid the temptation to over commit yourself. The last thing you want is to map out your clients goals and ambitions and then let any of the items or intermediate steps go unchecked. With rigorous implementation and follow-up on the road map and milestones you will give your clients tangible evidence of the value you bring.

The road map gives you a history of your client's goals and ambitions

Summary

Imagine the impact if your client was willing to show their road map to a potential referral. In a quick glance there is evidence of their planning challenges and the solutions you provide. Clients will become comfortable referring you to their family, friends and colleagues. The road map reassures your clients that you are looking at the big picture and are addressing issues they raised.

When you consider the effort that goes into acquiring a client and the referral value they bring to your practice, it makes sense to maximize your engagement. The Client Engagement Road Map can be an effective tool in this quest.

WORKING WITH THE CLIENT ENGAGEMENT ROAD MAP

To obtain a copy of Russell's Road Map application, Rmap, contact your Regional Director or Regional Consultant. Alternatively you can contact Russell at 800-RUSSEL4 (800-787-7354).

The customized Client Engagement Road Map is considered individual correspondence and, therefore, should be approved per your firm's policy.

First used: June 2005

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RFD05-4952
(06/05)
XX-XX-XXXX (06/05)

Russell

Russell University
Russell Investment Group
909 A Street
Tacoma, WA 98402-5120