BENEFACTION

Gift Planning Checklist for Advisors

Activity	Description
Defining the client relationship	
Determine if you are the primary advisor relationship for this client.	What other centres of influence are working with this client? (e.g. accountant, lawyer, charity, family members) Is there a relationship between these advisors? Identify any potential conflicts.
Gather client data	
Obtain client details.	Age, gender, marital status, occupation, residency, number of children and grandchildren.
Determine intent to donate.	Is there an intention to give? Is the client giving now? To which organizations? What are they passionate about?
Ascertain surplus assets.	The first step is determining what assets and/or income is surplus to their lifestyle needs. Has the client calculated their ability to give? How much can they give and still be safe in retirement and/or have enough estate for heirs?
Gauge the client's awareness of the tax advantages of charitable giving.	Gauge the client's level of understanding of charitable gifts and taxes. (1 poor/5 excellent) Remember that gift planning is an educational process. Helping your clients understand the tax benefits is key.
Establish a client statement about their client's current giving patterns; a gift plan.	Have they developed a giving strategy? (e.g. to support development and training of RCAF pilots) Are there current structures in place (e.g. endowment fund, donor advised fund, pledge to a charity)? See the Simple Giving Plan Template.
Does the client have a specific giving target (lump sum or annually)?	Approximately how much? Examining tax returns and cash flow will help you understand this and enable you to show them what they can save while donating too. See template for calculating lifetime giving.
For business owner's or executives with stock options.	Outline any known details of company or stock plan. What type of business is it? Does it have potential value? Does the client want to give corporately or personally?
Does the client wish to give now or later (e.g. bequest in their will)?	Yes/No. If later, have they included their wishes in their will and/or on beneficiary documents? Can you demonstrate the tax efficiency of giving now AND in the future?

Analyse and evaluate financial status	
Marginal Tax Rate	What is the clients MTR? Again, look at their tax returns. What are the income sources? Are there any OAS clawbacks? Does the client utilize advanced tax planning (e.g. holding companies, exit strategies)?
Cash and cash flow requirements	Most donors will assess how much they can give based on their assets, but it is important to know if the client has cash/income surplus to their needs? Does the client want to support charity, but also wants the security of a guaranteed cash flow?
Retirement Plans	What is the value of the RRSP/RRIF? Who is the beneficiary? Will the beneficiary need these funds? There can be significant benefits of de-registering early (e.g. taking $ out and donating = tax savings now). Consider assignment.
Life Insurance	Does the client have any existing life insurance policies in place? Terms? If no, and the client is insurable, do they have the ability/will to pay a life insurance premium? What type of policy is it? (e.g. term, u/l, whole)
Real estate or other capital property	Does the client own any other property that they may wish to donate? Have they had an independent appraisal done?
Estimated cost of tax on estate	Probate, tax on deemed dispositions at death, including tax on registered plans
Developing gift plan options	
Direct gifts	Benefits of gifting appreciated securities now.
Endowment funds	Is their direct family involvement? What is the funding strategy? # years?
Bequests	Consider insurance options to enable charitable bequests while keeping estate whole.
Implementing the gift plan	
Gift contract	This is a document or contract between the donor and the charity specifying the gift and how it should be used. Is there one in place?
Other documents	Name and contact details of accountant and lawyer. Copies of registered plan beneficiary forms.
Will	Is it up to date?
Monitoring the gift plan	
Tax returns	Assess the annual impact/tax savings. Plan for future donations.
Reports from charity	Annual reports from the charity. Summary reports from the endowment/donor advised fund.
Will	Annual monitoring to ensure the will remains consistent with donors wishes/circumstances.