Creating capacity

Five ways to personalise advice at scale

Russell Investments

Clients increasingly expect advice that reflects their goals, circumstances and preferences. The challenge is delivering that personalisation consistently as a practice grows. These five strategies can help standardise routine work, use technology more effectively and free advisers to focus on the work that cannot be automated: judgement, reassurance, difficult conversations and understanding the context behind each client's decisions.

#1 Build a repeatable client experience

Personalisation becomes difficult to scale when every adviser follows a different process. Map the core experience clients should receive across onboarding, implementation, reviews and ongoing communication. Create a consistent framework, then identify the points where the experience should change based on the client's service level, life stage, goals or circumstances.

Take action Build a client engagement roadmap for each service tier or priority client group, then tailor it using what you learn through discovery. Prioritise the client's most important issues, assign responsibilities and schedule the relevant conversations across the year. Contact your Regional Manager for access to the Russell Investments Client Engagement Roadmap Guide.

Keep in mind Consistency should not mean sameness. Be clear about which parts of the client experience should be standardised and where adviser judgement should change the experience based on the client's needs.

#2 Outsource or offshore routine work

Advisers do not need to perform every operational task themselves to deliver personal advice. Specialist support for administration, paraplanning and data entry can reduce repetitive work and give more time for client strategy, business development and relationships. Paraplanners can also support document preparation, file records and compliance checks, while the adviser retains responsibility for the advice.

Take action Map one high-volume workflow, such as post-meeting administration, client data entry or advice-document preparation. Identify which steps can move to administration, paraplanning or a specialist provider such as a virtual business partner, then pilot the process before expanding it.

Keep in mind Outsourcing only creates capacity if the hand-offs work. Poorly defined processes can replace adviser admin with rework, chasing and quality control. Track turnaround times, errors and adviser touch-time, not just cost.

#3 Use AI across the advice workflow

With 90% of advisers already using AI[1], the opportunity is to connect individual uses into more efficient, end-to-end workflows. AI can summarise client information before meetings, draft notes and follow-up communications, turn technical insights into client-ready content, create tasks, check and vet information, and support document and compliance reviews.

Take action Choose one recurring process, such as an annual review, and identify where AI can summarise, draft, personalise, check or trigger the next step. Use approved tools and retain adviser review of all client-facing and compliance-relevant outputs.

Keep in mind AI will not fix an inefficient process. Start with a well-defined workflow, then use AI to remove repetitive steps rather than adding another layer of technology.

#4 Share investment insights more efficiently

Advisers receive a steady flow of market commentary, portfolio updates and investment insights. The challenge is passing information on in a way that feels relevant to each client, without rewriting every communication from scratch. Create a repeatable process that turns insights into different versions based on the client's goals, life stage and concerns. Personalisation depends on context, not just content.

Take action Tag or group clients by portfolio, life stage and current concerns. When a relevant market or portfolio update arrives, create a small number of approved versions for the appropriate groups, then add a brief adviser note explaining why it matters and whether any action is required.

Keep in mind More communication is not necessarily better communication. Define what is material enough to warrant client contact and segment by what matters now, not demographics alone, so personalisation remains relevant rather than becoming noise.

#5 Standardise investment implementation

Investment implementation is one of the most repeatable parts of the advice process. Managed accounts or centrally managed portfolios can reduce time spent on research, portfolio changes and rebalancing, freeing advisers to focus on strategy, coaching and changing client needs. Personalisation remains in the advice around portfolio selection, risk, income needs, tax circumstances and client preferences.

Take action Document your core investment beliefs, then assess whether your current portfolios and providers reflect them. Start with one suitable client group and assess managed portfolio options on alignment with your philosophy, governance, investment capability, portfolio range, implementation, reporting and flexibility. Explore Russell Investments' Portfolio Management Institute for practical guidance on portfolio design, construction, management and implementation.

Keep in mind Standardisation can strengthen governance, but only if decision rights and exceptions are clear. Be explicit about who is accountable for portfolio changes, how decisions are documented and how exceptions are managed over time.

Source [1]: 2026 Value of an Adviser research

Start small, learn, then scale

1

Choose one area

Select one strategy, workflow or client group to focus on.

2

Pilot it

Test the change with a small group and track the impact.

3

Review and scale

Learn from the results and expand what works.

How Russell Investments can help

Russell Investments can help advice practices create capacity through practical client-engagement tools, investment insights, portfolio governance support and scalable managed portfolio solutions.

Speak with your Regional Manager about the resources and capabilities that can support your practice.

Or visit russellinvestments.com.au