

Translate your investment philosophy into a clear, confident message

This hands-on worksheet can help advisory practices articulate their investment philosophy for internal alignment and client-facing communication.

Sharpen your message to strengthen your offer

Your investment philosophy is more than an internal belief system. It's a tool that can build client trust, unify your team, and differentiate your investment management approach. Whether you build portfolios in-house, use model portfolios, or blend both, a clear articulation of what you believe—and how that belief shows up in your process—is central to long-term success.

Use this worksheet to:

- Document the beliefs that guide your investment decisions
- Align team members around a consistent narrative
- Prepare a client-facing articulation of your approach
- Stress test for clarity, credibility, and relevance

Step 1: Define your core investment beliefs

List the two to four principles that guide your investment approach. These should reflect your views on markets, risk, return, and investor behavior.

Example principles:

- Markets are efficient over time but can deviate in the short term.
- Long-term discipline beats short-term reaction.
- Diversification is the most reliable path to risk-adjusted returns.
- A consistent process—whether built-in-house or powered by models—is key to delivering quality at scale.

Your beliefs:

Step 2: Connect beliefs to your investment process

For each belief, describe how it is reflected in your implementation choices, e.g., using model portfolios, rebalancing, product selection, risk controls, etc.

Key question: What do you do—or not do—because of this belief?

Example beliefs and application:

- **Belief:** Markets are efficient over time but can deviate in the short term.

Application: We maintain broadly diversified portfolios grounded in long-term capital market assumptions but allow for opportunistic tilts where supported by data. Our approach prioritizes disciplined execution and avoids reactionary shifts based on noise or headlines.

- **Belief:** Long-term discipline beats short-term reaction.

Application: We follow a structured rebalancing process aligned to clients' objectives and risk profiles. Tactical adjustments are rare and reserved for strategic inflection points—not market sentiment. Our goal is to keep clients on track, not time the market.

- **Belief:** Diversification is the most reliable path to risk-adjusted returns.

Application: We diversify across asset classes, sectors, and factors, being mindful of correlations and the evolving risk landscape. We conduct regular reviews to ensure portfolios remain efficient and aligned with each client's evolving goals and constraints.

- **Belief:** A consistent process—whether built in-house or powered by models—is key to delivering quality at scale.

Application: We employ a consistent framework across all portfolios, using model portfolio structures to ensure rigor and repeatability. For clients with specialized needs, we customize around the core model without compromising process integrity.

Your beliefs and applications

Belief and application 1

Belief and application 2

Belief and application 3

Belief and application 4

Assessment checklist

Use this checklist to assess the strength and clarity of your investment philosophy and how well it’s reflected in your process.

1 Are your beliefs stated clearly and concisely?

Yes Needs work

What to look for: Avoid jargon. Use language that clients, all team members, and COIs can easily understand.

2 Is each belief observable in your process?

Yes Needs work

What to look for: If someone looked at your portfolios or process, would this belief be evident?

3 Is your process scalable and repeatable?

Yes Needs work

What to look for: Ensure your process is structured to be applied consistently—even as markets shift, your team evolves, and the practice grows—without depending on any one person.

4 Can you explain how your approach adds value? (not just products used)

Yes Needs work

What to look for: Avoid product-centric explanations. Instead, connect beliefs to outcomes (e.g., risk mitigation, goal alignment).

5 Could your explanation differentiate your practice in a client or prospect meeting?

Yes Needs work

What to look for: Does this reflect our distinct perspective? Or could it describe any practice’s philosophy and process?

Step 3: Translate your investment process into client-ready language

With your beliefs and application alignment finalized, focus on how you can clearly and confidently communicate your approach to clients. This includes *why* you invest the way you do, *how* your process works, and *what* clients can expect—using language that reinforces client centricity and builds trust.

Build the foundation

Articulate your core principles and approach in a way that puts the client first. This is your ‘why’ behind your process. The goal is to help clients understand how your philosophy connects directly to their success, not to markets or products.

Component	Client-centered language
Investment philosophy	Our investment philosophy is built on long-term discipline, broad diversification, and a consistent process that keeps your goals—not headlines—at the center. These principles help us make clear decisions in all market environments and serve as the foundation of your investment experience.
Client-first lens	Our process starts with you. Understanding your goals, timelines, and comfort with risk helps us design an approach that’s aligned with your values and gives you confidence as markets move and economic conditions shift.

Explain the process

Clearly communicate your structured investment process: what it is, how it works, and what it means for your clients. This means turning internal workflows into clear talking points that reflect your fiduciary care and process discipline. Help clients understand the ‘how’ behind your approach and what they can expect from the experience.

Whether you use customized strategies, model portfolios, OCIO solutions, or a blend, this flexible framework helps you convey your value confidently and consistently.

Process area	What you do (internally)	What you say (client communication)
Portfolio construction	Tailored portfolios, models/OCIO solutions, or a hybrid approach based on client needs.	We collaborate with you to prioritize decisions based on the financial outcomes you seek to achieve. We build your portfolio using a disciplined framework designed for long-term performance, diversified risk, and alignment with your goals. Depending on your needs, this may include customized strategies, model portfolios, or a blend of both.
Investment / portfolio selection and due diligence	Select investment strategies based on qualitative and quantitative criteria. Evaluate managers for process discipline, performance consistency, and alignment with the practice's philosophy. May use model portfolios or OCIO solutions.	We carefully select investment strategies based on real-world insight and rigorous analysis, looking at risk controls, consistency, and how they support your goals. When using model portfolios, we work with leading institutional managers and retain control over how the solution is tailored to your specific needs.
Oversight and monitoring	Conduct regular investment reviews—internally or with third party managers—to assess alignment with investment objectives, portfolio risk, and manager performance.	We regularly review your investments to ensure they stay on track with your financial plan. We evaluate risk exposure, manager performance, and asset mix, making adjustments only when it's in your best interest.
Rebalancing	Follow a defined rebalancing schedule with built-in thresholds to trigger portfolio changes. May use model portfolios or OCIO solutions.	We rebalance annually—or sooner if needed—to help your portfolio stay aligned with your goals. We use thresholds to trigger changes based on risk, cost, and market conditions. When using model portfolios, we partner with institutional managers who apply the same discipline, blending a scheduled and threshold-based rebalancing to meet your needs in changing markets.
Risk management	Monitor risk exposures across portfolio types, using tools such as stress testing, diversification thresholds, and manager watch lists. Include market risk and behavioral factors.	Managing risk is core to our investment discipline. We look at multiple dimensions—market risk, timing risk, and behavioral risk—to help protect your plan across market cycles. We use tools like diversification thresholds and due diligence to stay aligned with your risk comfort level.

Put it all together

Articulate the experience clients can expect—reinforcing trust, transparency, and the value of a disciplined process—to demonstrate your commitment to their financial outcomes.

Example: Our goal is to provide a consistent, high-quality investment experience aligned with your goals and evolving needs. We don't follow headlines or trends; we follow a process built for clarity, consistency, and long-term success. That's how we help you stay resilient, even when markets are anything but.

Building a purposeful investment philosophy

Get insights on using your investment philosophy to confidently position your approach with internal teams and clients alike.



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