

Deescalating a hostile situation, with Jeffrey Dunham

It is important to invest the time and resources into how to effectively communicate with your clients during an emergency situation. Effective communication serves to deescalate a situation from something that was hot and hostile to one that is more calm and manageable.

In this 4 part video series, Jeffrey Dunham takes you through a live situation with a client in which he had to navigate through a hostile situation.

Part one: The Email

(link to video)

Jeffrey begins the series by reading to you, verbatim, what a client said to him in an email. This client was frustrated by the performance of their accounts and even went so far as to question the competency level of the fund managers. They concluded the email by requesting that Jeffrey provide a plan of action detailing how he was going to get the accounts in question, back on track.

Part two: The Response

(link to video)

Jeffrey's response to this was not to defend or engage the client but rather to setup a time they could talk and go over the accounts together. Account information is available through an online portal, which Jeffrey told the client to be logged into before the call. The client responded by stating that they were not certain on how to go about doing that. This indicated to Jeffrey that they had not actually seen their account performance and were making assumptions based on general market activity.

Part three: The Call

(link to video)

When the call happened, the client reiterated the same concerns that they had previously mentioned in the email to Jeffrey. Jeffrey's response was to listen, understand their concern, and then he had the client pick the accounts they wanted to go over. They then looked together at the same information and the client was able to see details that they did not know existed. This made them realize that their account performance was not as bad as they previously thought and made them feel better about the whole situation.

Part four: Key Takeaways

(link to video)

The main takeaway from this series is to make sure you listen to your clients concerns. If you really listen to the issues they have, then you can better understand the situation, and guide them to the logical conclusion. As their financial advisor, you have to be able to provide them with comfort and understanding. Especially during difficult times.

[Click here](#), For a detailed outline on crisis communication for financial advisors provided by The Kelley Group.