

An apology is worth its weight in gold

Bob, a customer of an independent financial advisor, came to FDRS with a complaint about his interactions with his advisor. Bob felt that his advisor had misled him about why he couldn't take up a special deal for a loan, and was angry that his advisor had incorrectly blamed someone else for the problem. Bob felt his advisor had lied and was very angry about it.

The advisor received Bob's complaint and offered a financial resolution to make up for any losses from the missed opportunity. But Bob felt that he could not trust anything that his advisor said and couldn't move forward. He wanted the advisor to admit he had lied.

The advisor was similarly frustrated and couldn't understand why Bob wouldn't take the deal he'd offered when he was making Bob financially whole for any missed opportunity. Both felt they were going in circles.

When the complaint came through to FDRS, the facilitator contacted both parties and explained the process. Bob carefully prepared a letter detailing everything that had happened from his perspective, what had upset him, and what he felt would resolve the issue. Bob wanted both an apology and he wanted his advisor to take ownership of the issues Bob identified. He also wanted his complaint to be considered through a formal process, as he no longer trusted the advisor.

The advisor was provided a copy of the Bob's letter, which gave the advisor a better understanding of what Bob's concerns were and how to provide information in a way that Bob would understand. The facilitator continued to work with both parties and the resolution was that the advisor wrote a letter of apology. Bob was happy with that and the complaint was closed.

The facilitation process allowed Bob to process his feelings of distrust and hurt; to feel heard; and to work with his advisor in a neutral space. For the advisor, the resolution process allowed a chance to get at the real issue and to understand what Bob was after.