PrimeGlobal

Simplifying Complexity

Advisory Trends to Shape 2025

Business Advisor Global Trends Report

powered by mindshop

Foreword

Delving into data & insights gathered by Mindshop from over 200 experienced leaders & advisors in 13 countries, this report looks at five key advisory areas:

- **performance**
- **capabilities**
- **service delivery**
- **technology, and**
- **sales & marketing.**

These report results drove insights that deliver actionable ideas to address barriers, provide guidance on leveraging emerging trends plus practical ways to accelerate success. These insights are all suitable for advisors at any stage of the business advisory performance journey.

Success for advisors in 2025 will hinge on overcoming capacity & capability barriers while embracing emerging trends like Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration, delivery innovation & scalable business models.

However, time poor advisors must be cautious not to chase too heavily every new shiny trend at the expense of improving their core advisory capabilities. While it's important to be early adopters of new technologies, true advisory success still depends on staying client-centric, understanding key client issues, problem solving root causes & facilitating a tailored solution of high value to the client. People buy from people & in a world where trust & values are increasingly critical in client decision making each advisor needs to ensure they not only bring a human, authentic touch to their delivery but that their capacity constraints don't act as an Achilles' heel to quality opportunities.

With many clients facing difficult economic conditions in 2025, advisors need to ensure they can not only facilitate the process of challenging their strategies & visions but 'roll up the sleeves' to guide clients on implementing the change necessary for success.

Avoid reinventing the wheel in 2025. Accelerate your advisory edge through the resources, training, networking & experienced support from Mindshop to ensure you achieve your success goals in the year ahead.

James Mason
Managing Director, Mindshop

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Key Insights

This report identifies seven key advisory performance barriers & strategies based on survey data from five advisory success areas:

1. Performance
2. Capabilities
3. Service delivery
4. Technology
5. Sales & marketing

No matter where you are on your business advisory performance journey, leveraging the insights & data in this report can inspire meaningful improvements to your advisory business, paving the way for strong results in 2025.

What are the biggest barriers & strategies you need to focus on for greater success?

7 Performance Barriers

1. Capacity bottlenecks: team, processes, operational cadence & focus.
2. Self-sabotaging behaviours & poor emotional intelligence.
3. Perfectionism.
4. Lack of relevant advisory capability to help clients.
5. Ineffective technology adoption.
6. Inability to implement & coach change with clients.
7. Trying to do too much as an advisor. Delegate, stop-doing.

7 Performance Strategies

1. Building & sharing wisdom, not just knowledge.
2. AI integration embraced into clients' & own firm's strategies.
3. Implementation of profitable growth strategies with clients.
4. Challenging 'stale' client strategies & visions. Reflect on 2024 by asking what worked & what didn't.
5. Prework & incubation in advisory delivery.
6. Leveraged advisory models that harness technology, have a one-to-many structure or allow scale.
7. Simplifying complexity with clients.

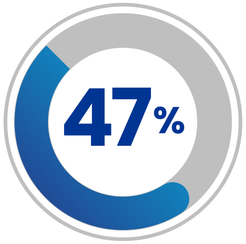
Performance

In 2025, business advisors should adopt a contrarian mindset to challenge clients' strategies, helping them navigate tough economic conditions while prioritising profitable growth.

Instead of cookie-cutter solutions advisors should embrace a Now-Where-How approach, meeting clients where they are & crafting tailored strategies & solutions.

Advisors can help time poor clients stay laser-focused on key priorities via a good advisory support cadence.

of advisors agree their clients are change ready



of advisors feel 2025 will be a more challenging year for businesses

Q. What do advisors see as the biggest challenges for clients in 2025?

*Weighted percent of respondents that placed the option in their top 3.

Q. What do clients see as their biggest barriers to business growth in 2025?

*Weighted percent of respondents that placed the option in their top 3.

Q. We asked leaders 'How could your advisor add even more value to you & your business in 2025?'

Performance

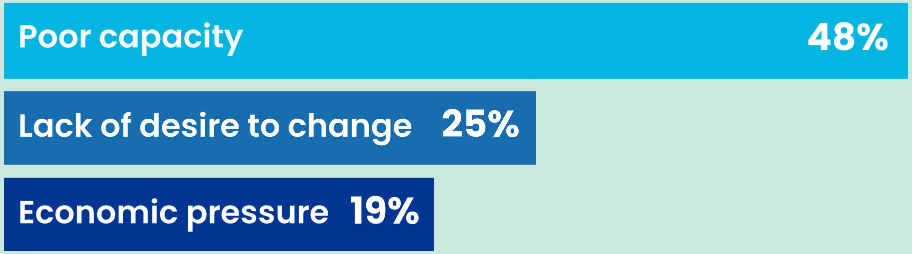
With 90% of advisors aiming to scale or steadily evolve their advisory businesses in 2025, there's a significant risk of stagnation due to continued capacity constraints.

The result could be a 'Groundhog Year' as more business is forced through an already incapable system.

Advisory success will hinge on improving people, systems, leadership support, accountability frameworks & overall capability improvement.

To drive growth, advisors must focus on creating leveraged, valuable & repeatable advisory offerings that align with their capacity & vision. If it's not structured & efficient, most advisors will struggle to make meaningful progress in 2025.

Q. What are the biggest barriers to you or your firm's growth in 2025?



Top barriers for accounting firms

1. Poor capacity
2. Lack of desire to change
3. Lack of confidence

Top barriers for coaches & consultants

1. Poor capacity
2. Lack of desire to change
3. Lack of sales or networking activity

Q. We asked advisors to select one statement that best described their focus for 2025.

46%
Scaling Up
Accelerating growth in our business advisory services to capitalise on opportunities in the market

44%
Steadily Evolving
Consolidating our current position or steadily evolving our advisory performance

1%
Scaling Back
Reducing advisory growth strategically or due to market conditions

9%
Professional Development
Focus on our advisory professional development to use in non-advisory service lines

of professional service firms feel it will be easy to attract & retain good people in 2025

of advisors felt they met their business performance targets in 2024

of advisors have a marketing or referral strategy mostly or fully in place

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Capabilities

In 2025, **Mindshop Advisors & Problem Solvers** are prioritising building advisory skills in strategic planning followed by how to win new business, leadership performance, coaching & accountability.

More experienced **Mindshop Accredited Advisors & Experts** are focused on agile teams & implementation along with coaching & accountability, strategic planning & leadership performance.

Advisors should carve out quality time to learn new skills & **practice facilitation,** so it becomes a habit. Confidence will then build over time.

Knowing **the best way to learn is to teach,** advisors should look for opportunities to educate others in new capability areas; whether in their own business or externally with clients.

Q. What key online courses do Mindshop advisors want to complete to improve their capabilities in 2025?

Mindshop Advisors & Problem Solvers

1. Strategic Planning
2. Winning new Business as an Advisor
3. Leadership Performance
4. Coaching & Accountability

mindshop advisor

mindshop problem solver

Mindshop Accredited

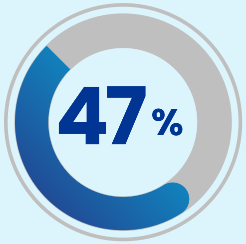
1. Agile Teams & Implementation
2. Coaching & Accountability
3. Leadership Performance
4. Business Intuition

mindshop accredited

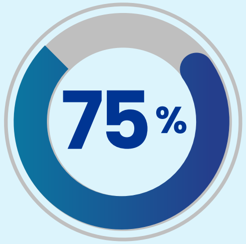
Mindshop Expert

1. Agile Teams & Implementation
2. Coaching & Accountability
3. Strategic Planning
4. Advanced Sales Skills

mindshop expert



of advisors feel they are good with time management & productivity



feel confident they could deliver a strategic planning exercise

Capabilities

"Poor time & priority management habits are often an advisors' Achilles' heel, stalling business advisory growth & negatively impacting their personal brand with both teams & clients."

James Mason
Managing Director, Mindshop

Q. What were advisors' top 5 tips for improving capacity, productivity & time management in 2025?

1. **Leverage Time Blocking & Time Boxing**
   Use calendar tools to block time for specific tasks, strategic work, or focused activities. Implement time boxing to maintain discipline, limit distractions & hold yourself accountable for completing tasks within a set timeframe.

2. **Delegate Effectively**
   Identify tasks that can be done by others, delegate them to free up your time & focus on high-priority or high-payoff activities. Invest in assistants or team members who can handle operational work, enabling you to focus on strategic growth.

3. **Prioritise Wisely**
   Use frameworks like 'Must, Should, Could' to focus on the most critical tasks. Reduce distractions & noise by clearly defining priorities & aligning your efforts with long-term goals.

4. **Adopt AI & Technology**
   Embrace AI tools & other technologies to streamline processes, reduce manual tasks & enhance efficiency. Create reusable templates, systems & processes to maximise your time & minimise repetitive work.

5. **Continuous Improvement & Learning**
   Attend time & priority management courses or workshops to refine your productivity strategies. Regularly review & adjust your practices, such as auditing your activities, setting clear goals & saying 'no' to non-essential demands.

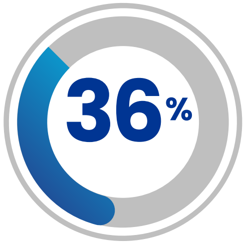
These tips focus on creating capacity, maintaining discipline & aligning efforts with meaningful outcomes.

Service Delivery

Structure is crucial for business advisory success. **Clear service lines ensure both advisors & clients understand available offerings, enabling internal & external referrals plus tailoring of solutions. Starting small with ad hoc problem-solving or a business health check establishes trust & value, often unlocking opportunities for deeper, long-term business advisory engagements.**

Don't reinvent the wheel. **Leverage pre-built solutions from Mindshop that you can package up to suit each client.**

of accounting firms have strong internal support to grow advisory service lines



of advisors feel ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) services will be a high growth area in the next 3-5 years

Q. What business advisory services will advisors offer in 2025?

Mindshop Advisors & Problem Solvers

1. Ad hoc problem solving (1-2hr client meetings)
2. Strategic Planning Workshops
3. Business Health Check

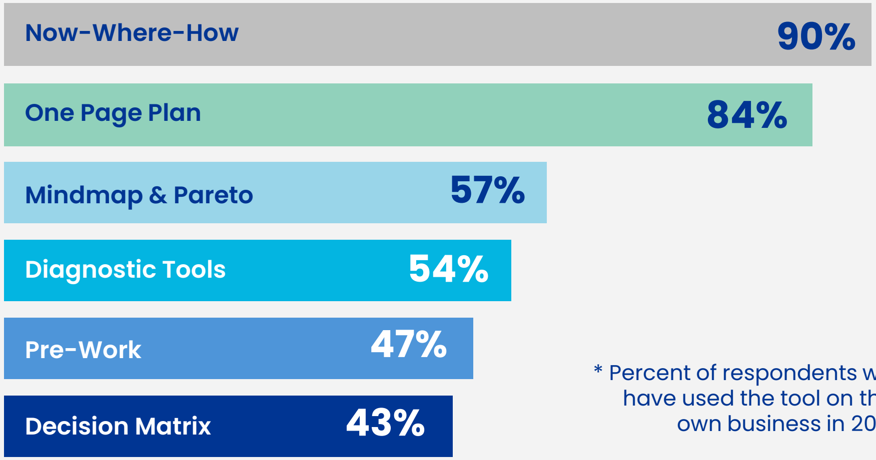
Mindshop Accredited

1. Ad hoc problem solving (1-2hr client meetings)
2. Business Health Check
3. Strategic Planning Workshops

Mindshop Expert

1. Monthly coaching or implementation support
2. Strategic Planning workshops
3. Annual Leadership Programs

Q. What Mindshop tools & methodologies have advisors used in their own business in 2024?



* Percent of respondents who have used the tool on their own business in 2024.

Service Delivery

Dr Chris Mason
Founder, Mindshop

> **There is no short-cut to greater confidence & success with business advisory solutions than consistent practice, practice, practice.**

Angela Grogan
Regional Director
Mindshop

> **Pre-work is important to allow incubation of clever ideas by clients & yourself. It also has the added benefit of freeing up meeting or workshop time for strategic discussions versus pure data gathering.**

Top five tips from Mindshop advisors for enhancing capability to deliver advisory services in 2025

1. **Just Start & Practice**
   Begin using the tools immediately, even with friendly clients or internally & practice extensively to build confidence & capability.
2. **Keep it Simple**
   Focus on a few foundational tools & processes, avoiding overcomplication & aim for progress rather than perfection.
3. **Leverage Diagnostic & Pre-Work**
   Use diagnostics to prepare & align before meetings & incorporate tools into your regular processes.
4. **Dedicate Time for Learning**
   Set aside time daily or weekly to complete training, reflect & experiment with tools to improve mastery.
5. **Learn by Doing**
   Apply tools in real scenarios, refine your approach based on experience & embrace continuous learning & reflection.

Top five tips from Mindshop advisors to add greater impact to the delivery of advisory services in 2025

1. **Prioritise Pre-Work**
   Ensure clients complete pre-work before sessions to sharpen discussions, save time & increase focus during workshops or meetings.
2. **Focus on Co-Creation**
   Collaborate closely with clients to develop tailored solutions that address their specific challenges & create meaningful impact.
3. **Enhance Facilitation Skills**
   Build confidence in facilitation & presentation to effectively guide client discussions & achieve desired outcomes.
4. **Simplify & Tailor Solutions**
   Keep processes simple & customise solutions to meet the unique needs of each client, ensuring maximum relevance & value.
5. **Leverage Tools & Structure**
   Use tools like Mindshop Meet & diagnostics during sessions to add structure, improve consistency & elevate the client experience.

Technology

Leveraging technology effectively will increasingly be critical for business advisory high performance for pre-work, efficiency, impact & value. With only 22% of advisors effectively using Mindshop technology & 55% Mindshop diagnostic tools, there's still a lot of room for improvement.

However, it's important to remember that 'people buy from people', so use technology to augment & transform the way you work allowing you to help more of your target market, more often.

Understanding & experimenting with leveraging AI in your day-to-day operations should be a priority for all advisors in 2025. But keep the output authentic or risk damaging your personal brand.

Top tips from Mindshop advisors for leveraging AI & innovative technology in advisory services in 2025:

1. **Start Small & Experiment**
Begin by exploring AI tools like ChatGPT or Copilot for tasks like summarising, content creation, data entry or brainstorming. Trial & error will help you discover what works best for your needs.

2. **Refine & Personalise Outputs**
Guided by your ideas & direction, use AI to flesh out the detail (e.g., 80% of the work) & tailor the remaining 20% to ensure authenticity & alignment with your unique voice or client needs.

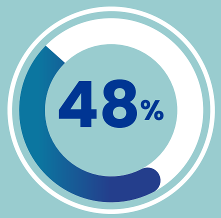
3. **Focus on Efficiency**
Leverage AI to streamline repetitive tasks, improve backend processes & transcribe or summarise meetings, while ensuring that human interaction & relationship-building remain central.

4. **Learn & Adapt**
Invest time to understand AI's capabilities & limitations. Develop good prompting skills & stay updated on new developments to maximise its potential responsibly.

5. **Use AI Safely & Ethically**
Be cautious about privacy, data security & the accuracy of AI outputs. Combine AI insights with critical thinking & train staff on responsible use.

of advisors feel they are effectively using Mindshop technology

of advisors regularly use Mindshop diagnostic tools



of professional service firm advisors feel emerging AI & technology shifts will take away a meaningful amount of traditional compliance work in the next 5 years

Technology

What technology ecosystem is most used by Mindshop advisors?

* Blue outline indicates the number one most used technology from those listed by surveyed Mindshop advisors.

not surveyed directly, technologies listed are based on feedback from Mindshop advisors.

mindshop Advisory Firm

PROPOSALS
- GO PROPOSAL by sage
- Word
- ignition
- Qwilr
- PowerPoint
- better proposals

INVOICING
- xero
- myob
- ignition
- CCH iFirm PRACTICE MADE PERFECT

FILE MANAGEMENT
- fyi
- OneDrive
- SharePoint
- Dropbox
- SuiteFiles

CLIENT MEETINGS
- mindshop TOOLS / MEET
- PowerPoint
- zoom
- Copilot
- OneNote
- Teams
- reMarkable

SYSTEMS, PROCESS MANAGEMENT & AUTOMATION
- Office 365
- fyi
- monday.com
- KARBON
- ClickUp
- asana

DASHBOARD & REPORTING
- spotlight reporting
- Power BI
- FUTRLI by Sage
- Fathom

PRE-WORK
- Google Forms
- mindshop DIAGNOSTICS
- ChatGPT
- SurveyMonkey

POST-WORK
- Office 365
- mindshop ONLINE & MEET
- Otter.ai
- ChatGPT

WORKSHOP DELIVERY
- PowerPoint
- mindshop TOOLS / RESOURCES
- zoom
- miro
- Teams

Sales & Marketing

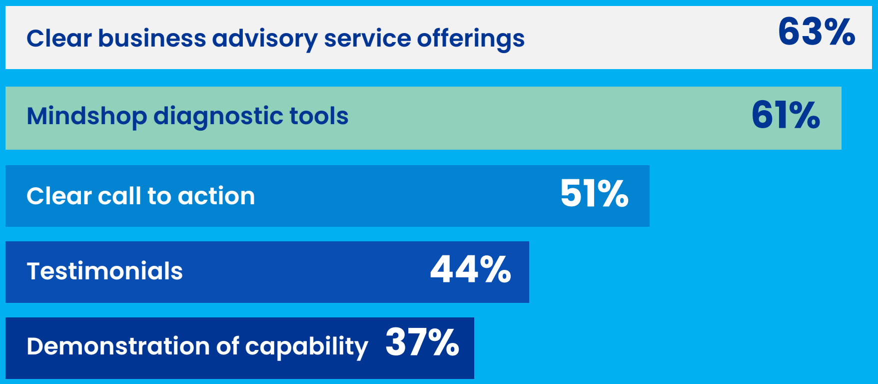
With capacity constraints or happiness with the status quo acting as an anchor for growth ambitions, in-demand advisors continue to achieve targets with organic referrals, continuous improvement & a simple contact program.

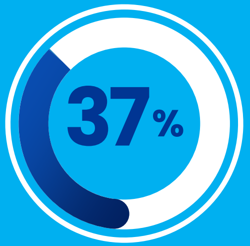
Those who seek to accelerate growth & scale will need to stand out in an increasingly cluttered market.

Paradoxically, flooding inboxes with emails, LinkedIn posts or campaigns does not guarantee success when positioning yourself as a high value, in-demand advisor. Instead, focus on:

- **demonstrating capability,**
- **educating quality referral sources on your growth goals,**
- **having clear service offerings, &**
- **developing well-targeted marketing initiatives filled with contrarian content.**

Q. What elements are included on business advisors' websites?





of advisors are not using, or very rarely use social media

get regular leads new from social media

Sales & Marketing

> **High-performing advisors accelerate growth by mastering two key strategies: demonstrating capability through impactful webinars, events, case studies & testimonials & leveraging high-quality referrals.**

Dr Chris Mason
Founder, Mindshop

Mindshop Advisors' Top 5 Tips for Winning New Advisory Business in 2025

1. **Leverage Referrals & Client Relationships**
   Ask existing clients for referrals & warm introductions, ensuring they feel comfortable advocating for you. Maintain regular contact with clients & provide excellent service to build trust & generate word-of-mouth opportunities.
2. **Demonstrate Expertise & Capability**
   Position yourself as a subject matter expert through thought leadership, events & case studies. Use workshops, diagnostics & video proposals to showcase your value in tangible ways.
3. **Focus on Client Needs & Challenges**
   Actively listen to uncover client pain points, challenges & offer tailored solutions. Leverage Mindshop diagnostic tools to assist.

   Ask powerful questions that reveal areas of their business they may not have considered. Dig deeper using the five why's questioning technique.
4. **Simplify & Specialise Your Offering**
   Focus on a few key services & excel in delivering them. Develop a niche & become recognised as the 'go-to' expert in that area.
5. **Proactive Outreach & Branding**
   Use proactive outreach, such as networking, partnerships & toe-in-the-water offers to engage potential clients. Build a strong brand image with an optimised website, videos & a clear marketing strategy.

Journey to High Performance

For Accounting Firms

	Launch	Foundation	Performance	Growth	Enterprise
Level	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**
Focus	Enable strong advisory conversations in key people. Professional development of partners and future leaders.	Basic advisory service lines in place. Capability is further enhanced. Use tools and methodologies internally.	Clear advisory service lines in place with adequate revenue streams. Regular tools training across team.	Grow advisory revenue across more advisors with strong internal referrals. Education path for team in advisory skills.	Advisory led firm leading to high growth in all areas of the firm. High client and staff attraction & retention. Scaled models.
Client Advisory Revenue	**Very Low**	**Low**	**Moderate**	**High**	**Very High**
Typical barriers	Time. Motivation. Selecting right advisors.	Client wins. Confidence. Leadership Support.	External and internal referrals.	Integration into firm-wide model.	Development path for future advisors.
Advisor Capability					
Mindshop accreditation level	Advisor	Advisor	Accredited	Accredited	Expert
Advisory ability	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Internal use of tools and methodologies within firm	Professional development. Basic tools used to problem solve.	Professional development. Tools and workshops.	Professional development. Tools, workshops, strategy.	Educate wider team in advisory skills. Tools, workshops, strategy.	Methodology to how you run the business, set vision and implement strategy.
Team Capability					
Advisory education using Mindshop Online with team	None	Starter Tier – advisory fundamentals.	Coach & Train Tier – building greater skills.	Comprehensive internal program across all tiers.	Comprehensive internal program across all tiers.
Marketing & Sales					
Marketing & sales approach	Friendly clients only.	Diagnostics & health checks start advisory conversations. Business advisory on website.	Contact program demonstrating capability across all advisory services.	Structured advisory-led marketing program and referrals. Niche client areas targeted.	Full integration to model with strong internal referrals and all selling advisory.
Advisory Model					
Services	Paid problem-solving meetings.	Health checks and paid problem-solving meetings.	Strategy, health checks, problem solving and workshops.	Strategy, coaching, health checks, problem solving and workshops.	Complete advisory model plus Growth Hubs and online coaching & training.
Revenue model	Hourly rate.	Fixed pricing.	Packaged value-based retainers.	Packaged value-based retainers.	Packaged value-based retainers.

Journey to High Performance

For Accounting Firms

Your Business Advisory High Performance Behaviour Map

Below is a model that outlines your current stronger and weaker behaviours and foundational traits against the five phases of business advisory success aligned to your current performance tier. These behaviours indicate the capability areas to focus on improving (across the firm and in lead advisors) and the foundational traits are the elements that act as a stable backbone to guide your journey to **Level 4: Growth**.

Those with a performance level of 1 should be at phase 2 of the behaviour model, those at level 2 should be at phase 3, level 3 should be at phase 3, level 4 should be at phase 4, and level 5 should be at phase 5 to achieve their performance goals.

Your goal: Your goal should be to have the vast majority of the behaviours and foundational traits as green. In achieving this you then have a fantastic platform to either stabilise your success at the current level or move to the next performance level you desire.

Business Advisory Phases	1. DATA ANY TEAM MEMBER Facts and figures provided about the business and industry trends	2. INSIGHTS RISING STAR Insights, research and analysis relating to data on the business or industry	3. PROBLEM SOLVING PROBLEM SOLVER Guidance and advice relating to a specific minor business issue or opportunity	4. STRATEGY STRATEGIC ADVISOR Developing strategies for a business, specific major issue or opportunity via workshops	5. IMPLEME EXPERIENC Ongoing g implementatio an organ
HIGH PERFORMANCE BEHAVIOURS					
Technology Adoption	Access to and basic use of applicable technologies to interpret client data.	Access to and adequate use of applicable technologies to interpret client data / insights.	Access to and good use of applicable technologies to collaborate with & advise clients.	Access to and very strong use of applicable technologies to collaborate with & advise clients.	Access to and expert level use of applicable technologies to collaborate with & advise clients.
Questioning & Listening	Asks simple questions that allows flowing, constructive conversations. Adequate listener.	Basic problem solver. Asks good questions to better understand client challenges. Capable...	Good problem solver. Uses tools to dig deeper to discover root causes. Good listener.	Challenges clients with very good questioning and problem solving using tools. Strong listener.	Challenges clients with expert questioning using advanced problem solving tools. Strong...
Advisory Mindset	Seeks to understand client challenges and opportunities through problem solving.	Adequate business acumen. Seeks to understand both client challenges and industry issues.	Good business acumen. Good understanding of client challenges and broader industry...	Strong business acumen. Regular contributor on industry / client issues & opportunities.	Expert business acumen. Thought leader on industry / client issues, trends & opportunities.
Facilitation & Coaching	Sets simple meeting agendas and can adequately manage a meeting through to actions.	Interprets insights for clients and can run an effective meeting through to clear actions.	Uses problem solving tools to facilitate 1-2 hour meetings with clients to drive to clear action.	Regularly facilitates workshops and coaches' clients well as part of implementation support.	Weekly facilitation of complex workshops with project teams. Expert coach & implementor.
Advisory Business Model	Monetises conversations around client data using technology & tools where applicable.	Delivers business health checks and monetises client meetings using technology & tools.	Monetises 1-2 hour problem solving meetings. Business health checks. Simple strategy.	Systemised advisory model with health checks, strategic planning, coaching support, workshops.	Advanced, systemised and scaled advisory model & services. High leverage of time.
Marketing & Sales Capability	Demonstrates capability occasionally with internal team members or clients to win work.	Demonstrates capability well with internal team members, clients or peers to win work.	Adequate contact program, demonstrated capability, drives referrals. Asks for business.	Good contact program, industry speaker. Drives referrals from target market. High conversion...	Thought leader in industry. Highly referrable. Sells through expert problem solving of issues.
Performance & Results	Consistently winning budgeted new 'Data' advisory work to compliment other revenue.	Consistently winning budgeted new 'Data' and 'Insight' advisory work.	Achieving budgeted revenue from advisory income matrix of services.	Exceeding budgeted revenue & profit from advanced advisory income matrix of services.	Exceeding budgeted revenue & profit from advanced, scaled, systemised advisory services.
Niche Expertise	Understanding of handful of approaches in a niche (e.g. strategy) that are used intuitively.	Understanding of broad range of approaches in niche (e.g strategy). Used periodically with...	Continuous learning and applying new niche tools in regular client meetings.	Continuous learning, developing and applying new niche tools in regular client workshops.	Regularly learning, developing and teaching others new niche tools & models. Market leader.
Team Advisory Capability	Basic listening and questioning skills.	Basic understanding of handful of problem-solving tools.	Broader and deeper understanding of problem solving, strategy, profit and...	Comprehensive internal training led by internal champions. Education on broad range of...	Very comprehensive internal training led by internal champions. Education on broad...
Internal Use of Advisory Tools	Learning for professional development and advisory mindset.	Professional development and using for problem solving.	Professional development and regular workshop, strategy and problem solving.	Professional development across wider teams with regular workshops, strategy and proble...	Advisory skills embedded strongly as core methodology for advisory as well as for running...

FOUNDATIONAL TRAITS

RELIABILITY	LIKEABILITY	TENACITY	AUTHENTICITY	CORE VALUES	ENERGY	COMMUNITY	CHANGE
Safe pair of hands. Always punctual. Good life balance	Very personable. Gets along well with people at all levels	Never gives up. Always striving for higher performance. Resilient	What you see is what you get. Self-aware. High emotional intelligence	Embraces value to others. Core values drive decision making	Provides energy to those around them. Strong self-belief	Strong connector with peers, team members and target customers	Strong level of change readiness. Embraces change. Growth mindset

Weakness Neutral Strength

Extract of an example diagnostic results report.

Where are you on your journey to higher advisory performance in your accounting firm?

Where are your businesses advisory performance & capability gaps?

Take the accounting firm advisory diagnostic to get your own tailored Business Advisory Roadmap & One Page Plan for success in 2025.

Accounting Firm Business Advisory Performance Diagnostic
https://loom.ly/cuT26Dl

About the Research

Mindshop

Mindshop is the leading business advisory solution empowering hundreds of accounting firms, consultants & coaches worldwide.

Founded in 1994 in Melbourne, Australia by Dr Chris Mason, Mindshop has now grown to support thousands of business advisors & business leaders across 13 countries.

Research

Data for this report was gathered from a survey that was conducted by Mindshop during November 2024 of over 200 senior business leaders & Mindshop advisors across 13 countries.

Accelerate Your Advisory Edge, with Mindshop

mindshop.com

Simplifying Complexity

Advisory Trends to Shape 2025

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