Shauna Covington
Executive Agent of the Month

Inside Features:
Linda Rocha
First Team Real Estate

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Company Profile
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Shauna Covington
Executive Agent of the Month
Shauna Covington strives to give her best every day and her professional and personal life reflect this belief.

A graduate of the University of Southern California’s School of Education, she launched her career in the Newport Mesa School District as an elementary and high school teacher. An accomplished educator, she earned the USC Educational Alumni Outstanding Achievement Award for her work.

In 1982, Shauna sought a new challenge and transitioned into corporate sales with Minolta Corporation. Shauna was recognized as Minolta’s highest-performing salesperson in Southern California and was promoted to a managerial position. After entering the world of corporate sales, Shauna honed her skills to improve her communication, negotiation and follow-up, all of which are critical to a real estate agent’s success. Her hard work and unwavering efforts were rewarded when she was promoted to a position as a sales manager for Minolta Corporation. Shauna’s ability to lead and inspire others became evident when her team nearly doubled its annual quota, becoming the top-producing team in the nation for the organization.

In 1988 Shauna decided to enter into the real estate business and became a licensed real estate agent. Covington Homes hired Shauna as an on-site project sales manager and agent for their home building communities in Orange and San Diego Counties. In addition to working with new home buyers in the process of selecting the homes that suited their wants and needs, Shauna was also responsible for managing upwards of 50 escrows at a given time. Her ability to adeptly combine the personal and professional aspects of her position was a telltale sign of a promising future in real estate. In this industry Shauna could make a tangible difference in the lives of others, selling her client’s homes and finding the perfect home for buyers. Over the past 22 years and moving forward, Shauna continues to enjoy the real estate industry, representing both buyers and sellers every day.

Her teaching experience provided Shauna with an ideal background upon which to build her real estate career. As an educator, she gained invaluable insight

“Never try to be better than someone else, but never cease to be the best that you can be. Make each day your masterpiece.”

John Wooden

By Lalaena Gonzalez-Figueroa - Errol Higgins Photography
on the value of preparation, listening to her students and helping them accomplish their goals. “Teaching school is a great preparation for life,” she reflects. “Spontaneity and the knowledge that there is more than one way to solve a problem are important lessons teachers learn.” She adds, “In real estate, it is essential to look at a variety of options in order to arrive at the ideal solution.”

Over 10 years ago, Shauna entered into the resale market in Laguna Beach and Coastal Orange County. Shauna’s real estate career of blending seamlessly a thriving business with a commitment to professional development and leadership makes her top-of-the-line service that is designed to maximize results while minimizing client stress. Stunning photography and lighting not only appeals to prospective buyers, but has earned her listings cover spots on numerous fine home magazines within California. A comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign ensures exposure to targeted audiences via print and online media, and virtual tours enable interested parties to experience Shauna’s listings at their convenience. When working with buyers Shauna utilizes her market knowledge to assist them in finding the homes and communities that will suit their wants and needs.

Shauna’s dedication to her clients has earned her the respect of customers and colleagues alike, along with many professional accolades. In addition to holding a position as Prudential’s number 1 agent in Laguna Beach in 2007, 2008 and 2009 for individual production, she has also earned a coveted spot among the PREA-100, an elite group of 100 top Prudential agents nationwide.
Though she appreciates the hard-earned awards that have resulted from her dedicated efforts, Shauna notes that the results for her clients are the true measure of her success. “Our buyers and sellers don’t care about what awards we have achieved, they are concerned about care, honesty and quality of service. Ensuring a smooth and enjoyable experience for my clients is so important,” she offers. “It’s such a wonderful job to have the opportunity not only to build professional relationships, but to make lifelong friends as well.” Kimberly Coleman is Shauna’s assistant and escrow coordinator. “Kimberly excels in providing excellence in support, service and dedication in this fast paced real estate world.”

Shauna has always enjoyed outdoor snow and water sports. At eight years old she was swimming competitively, and went on to participate in varsity swim teams in high school and college at USC. She loves to swim in the ocean all year long, but admits some of those winter morning swims suited up in her wetsuit can be a little chilly. Shauna’s family are avid swimmers and participate in water sports and recreation, she knows firsthand that the Orange County lifestyle is an enviable one. Her aim is to help each client find his or her haven within the region’s wealth of stunning properties, and she accomplishes this by developing customer relationships steeped in communication, trust and honesty.
“I can’t emphasize enough the importance of having a strong networking relationship with agents, friends and family. All this can help you keep things in perspective and support you in many ways.” Shauna draws her strength from her family. Her husband Chad, whose business is real estate development, now helps Shauna with her marketing and is a great sounding board with a vast experience in the housing industry. “Our four children, Emily (25), Leita (23), Alyson (18) and Ryan (15) are sources of constant joy in Shauna’s life.

Her passion for her profession extends beyond the impeccable client care that has become Shauna’s signature. In true form, she has maintained active involvement in her profession, as well. A Director of the Laguna Board of Realtors® from 2007 to present, Shauna has also served as Director of both the Southern California MLS and the Prudential Luxury Homes Division. “It is so fun networking and sharing ideas to better serve our clients,” says Shauna. Her efforts not only keep her updated on the latest trends and changes within her market, but also allow Shauna to expand her network of real estate professionals.

In buying and selling real estate, customers and agents alike know that the path is often lined with challenges and obstacles. With a professional like Shauna Covington as their guide, Orange County clients are discovering that there is also excitement and enthusiasm along the way.
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How To Demolish Your De-Motivators And Achieve Your Goals

By Carla Cross

It’s a tougher market out there. It can get you down. We all need tools right now to demolish those de-motivators. In other words, we must not only manage our business, we must manage our attitudes.

Why is managing attitude important? Because it determines how well you do.

**Ability is what you’re capable of doing.**

**Motivation determines what you do.**

**Attitude determines how well you do it.**

-Lou Holtz, famed former Notre Dame football coach

In this article, I am going to give you methods of organizing your thoughts so that they support your roadmap for success. You will be able to recognize when your thoughts sometimes order you around. You will get strategies to get control of your attitude-and order it around--to create greater success.

Much of my insight did not come from the experience of being a real estate agent, manager, and trainer. It came to me from all those years I spent as a musician, honing my performance skills so I could obtain a bachelor’s degree in piano performance. From the time I was four, I was in front of people playing the piano. I had to learn to manage my attitude to conquer the performance anxieties and uncertainness that accrue from tackling very difficult piano pieces in front of demanding audiences. So, much of what I will share with you here is a result of mastering musical performance. I know how to get better, and I will show you how to manage your attitude so you can get better, too.

I have identified eight challenges that sabotage us from reaching our desired results:

1. Not being mentally tough.
2. Thinking it’s someone else’s job to manage our attitude.
3. Blaming someone else for our failures, which leads to loss of power.
4. Underestimating what it takes to do the job.
5. Mastering negative ‘self-talk’ until it determines our attitude, beliefs, and outcomes.
6. Believing that the first time we do something is as good as it will ever get.
7. Thinking that our ‘inner manager’ is always working in our best interests.
8. Always ready with a reason why we don’t have to get into action.

**Are you tough enough?**

Let’s tackle the first component here: mental toughness.

You and I both know keeping a positive outlook is a very important component for real estate success. Yet, I have found that very few of the agents who go into real estate have the ready-made mental toughness to withstand the disappointments and rejections of the business. Sometimes they fail simply because they let their attitude manage them! It seems to me that most agents (and managers) could benefit from some additional skills in learning to manage attitude. I think these skills can be learned. Just listen to great athletes talk about their failures, injuries, and disappointments. They simply never give up!

Managing your attitude is part of your job.

In interviewing hundreds of agents after they have been in real estate several months, most of them tell me that they did not know real estate would be so personally challenging. They did not know how easy it was to ‘get down’--or how quickly they could lose that excitement, that enthusiasm they felt as a new agent.

Think back to when you were a new agent. How long did that initial excitement, enthusiasm, and hope last? According to my survey of agents new to real estate, they expected to make a sale their first thirty days in the business. Most of them do not accomplish that. So, if their expectations are not met, they lose that enthusiasm.

Most agents tell me it only took them about a month to start questioning themselves about whether they should be in this business. Since they did not realize they would have so many ups and downs, they were not prepared to deal with the ‘downs’. Unfortunately, then, they talk themselves out of the business--and do not even know they’re doing it! Knowing and applying what is in this section, then, can make the difference between success and failure in your career.
Manager’s tip: The best way for you to help your agents stay ‘up’ is to start them in an aggressive start-up plan so they get a sale fast. That is motivating!

Put a Plug in that Negative Self-Talk!
Remember when you were a kid. Did you ever want to take part in a sport, or learn a musical instrument? Or, did you want to start a venture or an adventure? Why did you want to do it? What did your parents say when you told them what you wanted to do? How strong was your motivation to do it? Did you convince your parents? Did you actually start? Did you keep going? What happened when, to get better, you had to devote more energy, time, and interest to it?

Looking back at your life in this area will tell you a lot about your intuitive sense about yourself. It will tell you how much belief you have in yourself, how much tenacity, how much ability to take direction from someone else to get better. It will tell you how willing you are to take risk and to change.

Now, fast forward to real estate.
Have you taken your intuition, body, and soul into the business like you did in this youthful venture? If not, you need to have a serious talk with your inner manager. He may be stopping you from ‘acting naturally’. That talk might sound like this:

“Now, Joan, I know we’ve been together a long time. You’ve done a good job overall giving me advice. However, you’re kind of in the dark ages about me now. I want to be successful in this new adventure, real estate. Remember when you supported me as a kid as I (fill in your adventure). Well, I need your support now. Quit that negative talk about failing, risk, and change. I’m not as scared as you think I am. Give me some pep talks and some laughs and some real positive strokes, like you did before. I need your positive support, Joan.”

Exercise: The next time you catch yourself talking negative self-talk, counter it with 20 repetitions of positive self-talk. Do this exercise at least 5 times a day for 1 week. You are retraining your mind to respond in a way that supports your goals.

When we go into real estate, we think that learning the inventory, grasping the technology, and attending risk management courses will assure our success. But, as we progress, we find out there’s a whole aspect of real estate that entails our managing more than just the technical parts of the business. You’re on your way, now, to that mental toughness you need to succeed at a higher level each year.

Carla Cross, CRB, MA, is president of Carla Cross Seminars, Inc. and Carla Cross Coaching, specializing in real estate sales and management. Cross, an international speaker and coach, is the author of 6 internationally published books, 20 productivity programs, and is a winner of the National Association of Realtors’ National Educator of the Year award. www.BrokerAgentSpeakers.com. © 2008, Carla Cross. All rights reserved. For information contact FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email susie@FrogPond.com; http://www.FrogPond.com.
For over 25 years, husband and wife team Dong Chau and Mai Vo have assisted their clients in navigating the mortgage process. Longtime professionals with extensive backgrounds in finance and economics, the couple operates with a philosophy that places their customers’ needs at the forefront of their actions. “We work closely with our clients to create finance packages that really benefit them,” explains Mai. “We examine the options that are available, and ensure that they’re educated and comfortable with their choices. Our goal is to consistently close financial transactions that are timely and as stress-free as possible.”

Dong and Mai relocated their business to MetLife Home Loans in December, 2008. Within a year they had earned recognition for their impressive production volume, and were presented with the Chairman’s Club Award, representing their rank among the top 2% of the company’s mortgage professionals. “Our business is built almost entirely on referrals which are the results of our dedicated service and the high level of satisfaction generated among real estate agents and borrowers”, Mai offers.

Having closed thousands of loans over the years, Dong and Mai have gained a unique experience that has allowed them to provide a trouble free process for their clients in the ever changing market environment. In-depth knowledge of the financial sector has also played an important factor in their long-term success. In fact, Dong left a successful corporate position over two decades ago, in order to focus on his burgeoning mortgage career.

“Dong was a controller and vice president of finance in the corporate sector,” explains Mai. “Because there were very few Vietnamese loan officers in the community, he began to work with clients as a side venture. He enjoyed it, and as his client base continued to grow he realized he had to make a choice.” With his wife by his side, Dong capitalized on the opportunity to help others achieve their dreams of home ownership.
Understanding the value of partnership in a real estate transaction, Dong and Mai have positioned themselves to collaborate with their clients, which include the real estate professionals as well as the individual customers. Orange County residents since 1977, they have witnessed firsthand the region’s impressive growth and demographics changes. In order to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse clientele, they have built a team that speaks four languages – English, Vietnamese, Spanish and French – and that works closely with real estate agents when necessary to act as a language and cultural liaison with their customers.

Strong communication is essential to a successful loan transaction, and Dong and Mai ensure that their clients are kept up-to-date throughout the process. “With an extensive background in accounting and finance, Dong is extremely adept at handling complex financial transactions and relates really well to the high-end clients like doctors and lawyers” observes Mai. “He’s also excellent at building relationships with first time buyers, guiding them through the loan process.” Dong notes that Mai’s international exposure (she earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Geneva in Switzerland) is an attribute in her ability to relate to the team’s diverse clientele. She is detail-oriented and sees the big picture in her clients’ financial plans.

California Coast Realty, Inc. owner/broker Vicki McDonald lauds Dong and Mai for their strong work ethic and consistent results. “They have their business down to a science,” she says. “My transactions always close on time, which is worth its weight in gold!” She notes that the team is up to date on changing guidelines, which alleviates the stress of unexpected issues. “When they say they can close a loan, they do it,” McDonald states. “It’s seamless every time.”

Dong and Mai have a long track record of success, being among the top 3 percent producers at a nationally ranked mortgage bank for multiple years. Relocating their business to MetLife helps maximize their clients’ results, they explain. “With MetLife’s vast range of products, we are able to work with customers across the spectrum,” says Dong. “From conventional and jumbo loans to FHA and VA packages, we have the financial options that our clients need, whether they are first-time buyers, investors or in the luxury market.” In-house processing, underwriting and funding, he adds, enable us to control the process and timeline of the loans. This, says Dong, is particularly helpful to real estate agents and clients in the REO and short sale markets where timely closing is of essence and a pre-approval from a direct lender is often a requisite when presenting offers.

After over two decades in the mortgage lending industry, Dong and Mai remain fresh and optimistic about the outlook of their business. “We love it,” says Mai. “Our work keeps us challenged; every day brings something new. We appreciate the opportunity to develop long lasting relationships with our clients, and to help them achieve their goals. There’s nothing else that we could imagine ourselves doing!”

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“Our goal is to consistently close financial transactions that are timely and as stress-free as possible. We have built a team that speaks four languages – English, Vietnamese, Spanish and French – and that works closely with real estate agents when necessary to act as a language and cultural liaison with our customers.”
First Team Career Path Propels Successful Agents to Management

LINDA ROCHA
Corona Branch Manager

By Lalaena Gonzalez-Figueroa

For over three decades, Linda Rocha has made Southern California real estate her business. As an agent, she cultivated a career based upon a strong commitment to customer care and thorough market knowledge. Her collaborative nature led to her work as a collegial mentor, and eventually she was recruited into a full-time managerial position. Working closely with her agents Linda now applies the same principles that led her to success, in order to assist them in maximizing their businesses.

Linda’s decision to join First Team Real Estate was influenced by the brokerage’s strong brand recognition, exceptional advertising and marketing campaigns, and myriad of tools designed to assist agents in navigating a complex and evolving market. Nearly 30 years later, the firm continues to lead the industry in innovative and effective business practices.

Though she’s no longer in the field, Linda hasn’t lost sight of the challenges – and opportunities- presented to agents today. “I am in the office six days a week,” she reveals. “I’m not only current on what is happening within the market, but I’m on top of how tools offered by First Team can best be utilized to assist our agents and their clients in accomplishing their goals.” A collaborative approach, notes Linda, is key to success. “I enjoy working with agents on developing business strategies, capitalizing on their strengths, and problem solving,” she reveals. “I consider myself to be a business partner to my agents; I really get a great sense of satisfaction from seeing them succeed.”

Linda, who boasted sales in excess of $100 million while in the field, is also a former broker/owner. Her experience provides a solid foundation upon which to now build her agents’ careers. She knows the industry, and assists agents in incorporating best practices into their own repertoires. “With so many tools available through First Team, my goal is to help identify each person’s strengths and areas for improvements, and to tailor an individualized plan that will maximize results,” she explains.
As an agent-driven company, First Team Real Estate continues to build upon its success not only through the efforts of its top-producing associates, but also by developing the company around its agents’ diverse needs. “Our leadership group solicits agent input before implementing major decisions and changes,” notes Linda. “We do not lose sight of what’s most important: that our sales professionals have the tools and support they require to meet the wants and needs of their clientele. Understanding this is what has enabled us to build a reputation as a brokerage that builds agents’ businesses.” The forward-thinking approach at First Team Real Estate is driving the company to unparalleled success, defying the odds during what is arguably one of the most challenging eras in real estate. First Team agents continue to thrive.

“The successes of our agents is inspiring,” asserts Linda. “We are doing business, and that’s important. Our real estate professionals are focused and optimistic, and they’re getting the job done for their customers.”

Among the multitude of tools and services at First Team Real Estate are proprietary programs designed to pinpoint market value for listings; a strong lead capture and buyer’s pipeline group; and an internal support system that includes attorneys, administrative support, and affiliate offices including title, escrow and lending. And thanks to the vision of Founder and CEO Cameron Merage, there’s no end in sight to the company’s innovative developments. Notes Linda, “Today more than ever, agents want answers. Our office provides them. There’s no mistake: we are in the business of real estate, and we are committed to our industry, our agents and our clients.”

After 30-plus years in the business, Linda Rocha is still excited about the real estate industry and, more importantly, about seeing her agents accomplish their objectives. “I get such a sense of satisfaction in helping people achieve their goals,” she smiles. “There is no greater reward than supporting their successes.”

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First Team Real Estate ranked number 1 for Total Sales in Units Market Share, in Corona, According to TrendGraphix, Inc. Top Offices Report, published February 2010.*

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* TrendGraphix, Inc. Top Offices Report. *All reports are published Feb 2010, based on data available at the end of January 2010. All reports presented are based on data supplied by the Orange County, Orange Coast, Pacific West, Downey, Rancho SE AOR, Laguna BOR, and Desert AOR or their MLSs.
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Amazing Ocean Views from this Tuscany Villa in Temple Hills. This 4 or 5 bedroom 4.5 bath home is situated on a quiet cul de sac and has the finest details and high end features. The fifth bedroom has a full bath and could substitute for a personal gym. The gourmet cook's kitchen has beautiful custom granite countertops and custom cherry wood cabinetry with top of the line appliances. Relax in the Great Room with large fireplace and full entertainment system with surround sound.

1406 Dunning Drive, Laguna Beach, CA  $2,325,000

This fully remodeled Beach Front 4 bedroom 2.5 bath has private beach access. Enjoy this home with it's amazing ocean and coastline views of one of Laguna's most beautiful beaches. All new baths, kitchen with brand new high end stainless appliances, granite counter tops and custom cabinetry. New lighting throughout. Floor to ceiling windows open to the sounds of the waves on the beach below.

32027 Point Pl, Laguna Beach, CA  $4,995,000

Catalina Island sits right in the middle of the fantastic panoramic ocean views from this model residence. Located in one of the best beachside communities in Laguna Beach, this Three Arch Bay turnkey home features 2,861 square feet with 3 bedroom and 3.5 baths.

17 N Vista De Catalina, Laguna Beach, CA  $2,295,000

This Magnificent Tuscan Inspired Estate designed by well known Architect Stan Schofer is truly a masterpiece. Located in the hills of San Juan Capistrano, this fenced 5 ac compound has panoramic views of Capo Valley and the Ocean.

30522 Hilltop Way, San Juan Capistrano, CA  $6,295,000

The views, the views, the views!! Gorgeous ocean, Catalina and canyon views from this great single story home in the Portafina enclave. Great home for entertaining! Watch one of Laguna’s stunning sunsets off the back deck!

789 Balboa Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA  $1,569,000

A Classic 1928 Laguna Cottage in the heart of the village. Recently fully remodeled, this charming home has ocean views and fantastic sunsets and is an easy walk to some of Laguna’s finest beaches, art galleries, fine dining and shopping.

867 Wendt Terrace, Laguna Beach, CA  $2,195,000
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18541 ROSENAU DRIVE,
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LISTED AT $1,299,000

This home is located on one of Villa Park’s most prestigious streets where custom homes are priced at over one million. Nothing has been spared in the remodeling of this home. New kitchen cabinets, newer stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, and lots of storage. Most of the interior floors are pavers which have just been redone. The family room is open to the kitchen and has a fireplace and entertainment area. The master bedroom is very private and separate and has a large master bath and walk in closet with shelf and shoe storage. All bedrooms are down except one large game room and bath on the second story. This is a great entertaining room. The lot for this home is over 20,000 sq ft. and has pavers throughout. There is a beautiful pool and spa in excellent condition. The yard is very private.

Go to www.villaparkhomes.com for additional pictures and information
Ronald Accornero
OC Signature Properties
714-396-7295
Email: homesales@earthlink.net
When you evaluate a Champion Agent’s prospecting and lead generation, you will find these people have more than one lead generation source. Our objective is to establish a lead triad. A lead triad is at least three sources of business that generate leads that account for at least 15% to 20% each of your overall revenue or units.

When I evaluate most Agents’ businesses, they either have one source that they rely on too much (creating an imbalance of leads and a vulnerability to their business), or they have too many lead sources that generate low levels of leads and business. They have ten lead sources and most represent less than 10% of their business. These are bookend errors that are equally disastrous. We need to have three to four lead sources that can account for a substantial amount of business. When you have a lead triad in position, if a prospecting and lead follow-up source dries up or diminishes because of competition intensifying, marketplace or industry changes, or just the breaks, you have already established, tested, and proven methods of prospecting and lead generation that you can shift your resources to. You can ramp up those sources to a high level quicker, which saves you stress and a cash flow crisis.

If you don’t have a lead triad, your probability of weathering the storm is lower. It will take a greater toll on you to navigate the storm. If you have too many sources, you have to pick one or two, without knowing if you selected the right ones or if your strategy will work. With only one solid source, you are starting from scratch, attacking the steepest part of the learning curve and hoping for quick results. Either one of these approaches can be deadly.

If I am describing your business, I have one word of caution for you; don’t try to add too much too soon. The natural tendency when I talk about implementing a lead triad strategy in one’s business is to rush to add two, three, even four sources now. The better approach is to select one and commit to that one. Track the results and make the changes and requirements necessary to increase the results. Don’t change your source or add another one for six months until the strategy, tactics, and implementation have been fully tested. We all need to achieve a lead triad of strength in our business. Just as a table needs three legs at a minimum to have stability from falling, so does your business.

Dirk Zeller is a sought out speaker, celebrated author and CEO of Real Estate Champions. His company trains more than 350,000 Agents worldwide each year through live events, online training, self-study programs, and newsletters. The Real Estate community has embraced and praised his six best-selling books; Your First Year in Real Estate, Success as a Real Estate Agent for Dummies®, The Champion Real Estate Agent, The Champion Real Estate Team, Telephone Sales for Dummies®, Successful Time Management for Dummies®, and over 300 articles in print. To learn more, please visit: http://realestatechampions.com/closingthesale/.
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If you don’t plan for it, after-the-sale service won’t happen. You’ll get so consumed with the next deal and with the task of earning the next commission check that you’ll overlook the opportunity to create long-term revenue through your past clients.

An after-the-sale service program is like most things in life: people get derailed before they take the first step, and if they don’t take the first step — the step that involves establishing the program you commit to follow — they can’t begin to meet the objective.

Use the following to guide you as you create your plan. It helps you define exactly what you need to do in the first 30 days after the sale and on an ongoing basis thereafter.

Laying the groundwork during the transaction period

When working a real estate transaction, you have two prime opportunities to develop interpersonal connections and high-grade referrals. One is during the transaction period when you’re working with your client to buy or sell a home and close the deal. The second is during the 30 to 45 days that follow the closing.

If you do a poor job during the transaction, you’ll be hard pressed to recover lost ground after the closing. An attorney who blows a case doesn’t get a second chance from the client, and the same holds true for real estate agents. Your service during the transaction must be stellar, or you’ll sacrifice the chance for repeat and referral business, which is the easiest and least costly business to acquire. If that isn’t bad enough, you’ll also lose the opportunity to collect client testimonials and generate positive word-of-mouth.

During the transaction period, you’re in frequent contact with your clients and have ample opportunities to provide excellent service; make a strong, positive impression; and develop the basis for a long-term relationship by following these steps:

• When you first begin to work with clients to buy or sell a home, their enthusiasm is high. They fully anticipate and expect that they will be able to find the perfect home and that you are the ideal agent
to accomplish the task. During this initial period, your clients think about little other than their real estate hopes. Your presence becomes woven into the fabrics of their lives and their conversations with friends and family members. This is an ideal time to ask for and win referrals.

- If the sale or purchase process drags on, expect your clients’ level of excitement and energy to ebb. At the same time, expect their focus on their purchase or sale to intensify. The most important thing you can do during this potentially dangerous time – when your clients are experiencing concern and talking non-stop about their real estate issues with others – is to stay in frequent communication; offer solutions; provide calm, professional advice; and retain the clients’ confidence in you and your abilities.

**Setting a service agenda for the first 30 days after the sale**

If you did everything right during the transaction, then your clients were totally satisfied with your service when the deal closed. Now you have a decision to make: Do you wish your clients well and walk away, or do you begin an after-the-sale service program that turns them into clients for life? You already know the answer: You begin to turn them into clients for life.

1. Begin by personally calling your clients at least four times in the 30 days after the closing.

   - Call in the first few days after the closing to thank them for the opportunity to serve them. Tell them how excited you are for them to be moving into their new home. Share an anecdote about working with them that will make you all laugh and touch their hearts.

   - After the call, send a hand-written thank you note further expressing your thanks and asking for future business or referrals.

   - By the end of the first week, call again. Once again, express thanks for trusting you. Then ask: How did the move go? Did anything get broken? How do the kids like their new rooms? Have they met any of the neighborhood kids yet? Did the seller leave the home properly? Is there anything that wasn’t right that they need any help with?

   - This last question can open a Pandora’s box of issues, and that’s exactly why to ask it. If there are problems you don’t know about, you may be blamed for the mishaps without any opportunity to do anything about them. Most will be issues between the seller and the buyer, and power over the seller – unless legal action is involved – is gone because the transaction has now closed. Sometimes all you can do is provide a listening ear and sympathetic voice. Other times you can make a few phone calls to help right the wrong. The fact that you are willing to listen and to see what you can do speaks louder than any demonstrable action. It shows that you care.

   - At the conclusion of the second call, send another hand-written note. Express concern for the unresolved issue and again thank them for their trust and for taking time to talk with you today.

   - Call again at the two-week mark. Ask how they are doing getting out of boxes and settling into their new home. Update them if you’ve made progress on the issue that was concerning them. Ask them about the kids and their transition. Before hanging up, ask if your service is needed. Also, ask them for referrals.

   - On their 30-day anniversary in the home, call again. Congratulate them on their great decision in selecting this home. Check on the kids and their progress settling in to the house and neighborhood. Thank them again for the honor to serve them.

*continued on page #32*
By Joeann Fossland

“Popular Coach Says Organize Resources and Retune Attitudes for Success.”

The ritual of spring cleaning results in a feeling of freshness and renewed energy. After burrowing in for winter, you may find you are surrounded by clutter! Even those of us in the warm climes (yes, they DO exist!) can benefit from a yearly ritual of throwing out the old and making space for the new.

I am not just talking about physical space, either. It’s time to clean out all of your systems. Your databases are your daily working capital and the foundation of your business today and in the future. Do they need some spring cleaning? Your body is the vehicle through which you get things done—does it need some fine tuning? Your clientele can be great or drain energy … who should you let go of?

As a coach, I encourage my clients to work on the attraction principle. What I am referring to is the ability to attract, like a magnet to you, the people and situations to grow your business to your desired vision. Though it may sound a bit woo-woo, when you are working in the flow of things—not resisting what’s coming at you—you are able to almost effortlessly attract what you really desire. Having the space for this to come in is part of the equation. So a good spring cleaning can free up that space!

The list below contains many areas you may want to take a look at. If you want to take this a step further, there is an assessment called The Clean Sweep (www.joeann.com/cleansweep.htm) designed by Coachu that will help you get your whole life squeaky clean!

Your Top 10 Spring Cleaning Areas

1. Your Office Files and Folders -- Are your file drawers stuffed with no room for the new stuff? Clean out, throw out or store. Put one to two hours on your calendar each week to tackle this until it is done.

2. Your Databases -- Have you segmented your databases? Your goal is at least three lists: Begin with a short list of the 20% who give you 80% of your referrals on this list. These are the people who are your biggest supporters and with whom you’ll form the deepest relationships. Then there are the people you want to stay...
in touch with less often, but regularly. And finally the “suspects” and long term potential clients. If you aren’t using real estate related software or Pat Zaby’s new Respond program (which turns Outlook into a real estate specific tool), make this a priority to get it set up. If you ever want an “escape” from real estate, this information is what you’ll have to “sell” or negotiate with.

3. Your Rolodex -- As you segment your databases, this is part of the process. Take out of there the jerks. Life is definitely too short to work with people who treat you miserably. You don’t need them.

4. Your Systems -- Reviewing or creating the systems to automate your business is a critical time effectiveness element. What systems need fine tuning? What needs to be development? How can you use what you already have to bring this to a higher standard. An example would be implementing the “Campaigns” in Respond or the “Action Plans” in Top Producer.

5. Your Bad Habits -- What gets in the way of you doing your best? Do you procrastinate? Refuse to delegate? Let the clutter and piles render you time challenged? Make a list of the habits to zap this year and then take 1 each month and upgrade the way you operate. For instance, in March, do not let a piece of paper cross your desk without filing, tossing or taking action on. You will find if you are consistent in doing this for three weeks, you have formed a new habit. You could do that 13 times this year!!!

6. Your Stuff -- Do you need a Feng Shui Consultant or Professional Organizer to come in and get you squared away? Clutter drains energy - literally makes you tired. Free up space! The natural way things work is that space attracts because nature abhors a vacuum.

7. Your Attitude -- Thinking ... Take the storm windows down and put the screens up to let the fresh air in! What one belief, if you let go of it, would create the most joy in your life? One of mine has always been that you have to work hard to be successful. That has had me put a lid on my vision and goals, because it looked like I would have to sacrifice other things I enjoyed to attain a really big goal. As I’d look around, I’d see others who are achieving BIG goals and the time they invest is not more than my investment into my business. This is probably true for you too.

Where have you limited or put a lid on yourself because you believe something to be true that was, in reality, just one possible way of looking at it? Everywhere you find you are limited or stopped, examine the “rule” you have made up that keeps you in that place. Then play with it by thinking up five other possible “rules” that could pertain. Or look at what other’s that are successful have as their “rules”. Hint: ask them!

8. Your Desk -- If you can, change the way it faces or its location. Give yourself a fresh point of view!

9. Your Equipment -- Are you tolerating equipment that needs replacing or upgrading? Look at your budget and make a list of what and when you will replace the less efficient equipment you have. Even though this costs money, there may be savings of time or other resources to offset the investment. Or maybe, it is what will take you to the next level in your business by the differentiation it will provide. This would include a spring cleaning of your Internet marketing and web site.

10. Your Clientele -- Do you have listings that are costing you money and never going to sell? Or buyers who are true lookey-loos? One of the reasons top producers are successful is because they don’t try to take every piece of business available but skim the cream. If you are busy trying to keep that nasty seller happy or running around with the lookey-loos, you don’t have time to prospect or work with the nicest people. Let go of the “bad” ones! If nothing else, you’ll stop the abuse and feel better about yourself. You do not have to put up with people who do not respect what you do.

Now, print out and review this list. Make notes of which three areas would make the most difference for your business and situation. Then put actions on the calendar to take care of these 3 this month. Then watch the attraction principle go to work for you.

Joeann Fossland, Certified e-PRO Trainer, GRI, PMN, is a Master Certified Coach and Founder of the Web Women Giving Circle, national speaker, trainer, who works with highly motivated people that want to excel in business while having a life they love. Joeann created The Real Estate Game ™, a daily motivational accountability call that is played in a game format for 4 weeks. She also writes a monthly newsletter and hosts free teleconference calls. Copyright© 2007, Joann Fossland. All rights reserved. For information contact the FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email susie@FrogPond.com; http://www.FrogPond.com
Simple as this approach sounds, it will enable you to lock your clients in for life, plus it will open the door to referral business that flows freely.

2. While you’re at it, call the other party involved in your real estate transaction as well.

Every real estate deal involves a buyer and a seller. In most cases, you represent only one of the two parties, but why not call and offer after-sale service to both? Do you think the other agent is doing this? For your answer, you only have to look at the National Association of REALTORS®’ finding that only 13% of 2004 real estate clients used an agent they had used previously to represent their interests. My estimation is that fewer than 10% of agents actually call their clients after closing.

When calling to follow up with the party represented by the other agent in your transaction, be ready for a response of surprise and great appreciation. The fact that you are calling four times in a month, while the agent who got paid to represent their interest hasn’t called even once, will positively awe most people. By the end of your 30-day after-sale service period, the names of the other agent’s clients will be in your database, and you’ll be the one receiving their referrals.

3. Deliver or send a gift to your client.

This gift is usually called a closing gift, but even if you attend the closing, don’t take the gift with you for two reasons:

• At the closing, your clients will be focused on the transaction and thinking about their impending move and all the challenges that lie in front of them. Your gift will be lost in the shuffle.

• The papers presented at the closing put the amount of the real estate commission in writing, causing your clients to focus on exactly how much money you made from the transaction. If you give your gift at the same time, they could make a negative comparison between the value of the gift and the money you received.

• In choosing your gift, don’t go overboard. Save any over-the-top gestures you might want to extend until after your clients have settled in and after your commission has long-since been paid. The more you deliver after you get paid, the more your gift communicates that you care about your clients, not your commission check.

• Find a closing gift that reminds clients of you and your service. Give them something that can be used rather than consumed. A great bottle of wine or gift basket quickly disappears. A customized mailbox, door knocker, or yard plant will last almost forever.

• By taking or delivering your gift to your clients’ new home, you’ll put it in their hands at a time when it can create the most significant feelings of good will, warmth, and referrals. If you want to give them something at closing, hand them a thank you note.

Another nice gesture is to help your clients notify their friends of their move. Offer to create a postcard with a picture of their new home on the front and to print up a couple hundred for their use. Then offer to mail them out on your clients’ behalf. You’ll save them the cost and enlarge your database to boot.

You might even call people on the list to make sure they received the card you sent for your client. You could then ask them if they are committed to another Agent. If not, then you’ve opened the door to a new client relationship.

The series of these items should be considered a minimum for an agent at your level who just wants to do more listing presentations and work on personal real estate development. It allows for creative thought and leverages the most profitable and productive activities in real estate.

Dirk Zeller is a sought out speaker, celebrated author and CEO of Real Estate Champions. His company trains more than 350,000 Agents worldwide each year through live events, online training, self-study programs, and newsletters. The Real Estate community has embraced and praised his six best-selling books: Your First Year in Real Estate, Success as a Real Estate Agent for Dummies®, The Champion Real Estate Agent, The Champion Real Estate Team, Telephone Sales for Dummies®, Successful Time Management for Dummies®, and over 300 articles in print. To learn more, please visit: http://realestatechampions.com/closingthesale/.
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07/09-10/09
Are you an athlete? Or do you believe a sign of success is you can afford to hire someone to jog for you? Well, whether you run for fun or just when threatened, you would benefit from a professional coach if you wanted to get better at running. A professional coach would show you how to be motivated, how to set goals, how to mastermind your training schedule, and the critical when to push and when to hold back.

Do you want to improve as a competitor in real estate? If you perceive the competition to be stronger and ‘faster’ then ever, then you need more skills as a competitor just to be in the ‘race’ for business and profits. Your progress and success so far in the business would not be possible without your personal talents and skills. Now is the time to build on your personal strengths with the services of a ‘gifted’ coach. How could you benefit from a professional coach? Let us count the ways!

**Systems.** Good coaches have a method or a system. A real estate associate who follows a proven system is bound to improve. Having confidence in the system may be more important then the system itself. A coach brings the system and builds the confidence.

*By Dave Beson*
Advice. A coach brings information from a great variety of sources and experiences and explains why one method or technique works and why something else doesn’t. This shortcuts the trial-and-error process and builds success. A coach will help you make the right decisions in order to stay on course.

Motivation. A good coach will help provide the necessary ‘kick-start’ at the beginning of your career. Reporting on a regular basis, even if only weekly by mail, email, or phone, can provide the foundation of your personal training plan. If you are leading a balanced or integrated lifestyle, chances are you can’t give 18 hours a day to your real estate career. A coach can help motivate you to achieve your very best during your working hours.

Burnout and Slump Prevention. A coach who carefully monitors a sales associate’s progress can recognize when ‘trying harder’ is not the right approach. Perhaps the best prescription is to halt, refocus, and start on a new direction. If and when rejection or frustration derail your personal progress, a coach can help get you back on track.

Specific Activities Checklist. The coach can remind the sales associate of what it is he or she is trying to achieve. This frees the salesperson to concentrate on the actual activity. A good coach keeps the salesperson on course by making sure the associate follows the training plan.

Goal Setting. Salespeople sometimes say they want to do one thing, yet their behavior indicates they want to do another. While a coach may not be able to read your mind, they can facilitate you reaching your goals. A coach can help pick goals that are realistic and design personal training that are realistic and design personal training plans to achieve those goals, both long and short term.

Reaching ‘The Next Level’. When you are self-coached it’s easy to get stuck on a plateau. You may feel you have accomplished all you can do. You may be doing only those activities that are fun or personally satisfying. A coach can suggest and help implement different types of activity to help you reach the next level of performance in your career.

Feedback. Many salespeople have a difficult time evaluating their own training. Keeping a log of activities and time helps, but it’s no substitute for a good coach. A coach can look at your workload and evaluate it more objectively than you can. Your coach may point out that your number of appointments look really good but you are falling behind in your daily prospecting. A coach can give you confidence by evaluating your performance.

Cheering Section. Every top performer has doubts. You need someone to affirm that what you are doing is correct. You may get a pat on the back or you may be left alone to process your disappointment after a turn-down or blown opportunity. Then you can analyze what happened and change course. After a successful presentation or sale, it’s great to have your coach there to celebrate with and help with encouragement.

Fun. As we become adults we tend to eliminate activities which are not fun! Your coach can help you enjoy what you do by varying what you do and by making your work more fun. This may even include to whom you make your presentations or a new twist to keep your work fun.

When you choose a coach, be sure you make time for the changes you decide to implement. Why bother to get a coach if you’re not willing to change?

Be sure to select a coach who will meet your demands for charisma and for knowledge of your business or lifestyle needs. If you want someone to help you grow, my bias is they should have experience with success. Find out exactly who will be coaching you.

Dave Beson, CRS, GRI, is president of Dave Beson Seminars, in Minneapolis, MN. His seminars are in demand around the world. If you’d like more ideas on how you can coach yourself or each other to new highs in performance and satisfaction, then get connected to the Dave Beson “Life Success Systems.”©Copyright 2003, Dave Beson Seminars. All rights reserved. For information, contact Frog Pond at 800.704.3764 or email Susie@frogpond.com; http://www.frogpond.com
What The Real Estate Agent Wants

By Walter Sanford

Nope! I never did. As a Realtor®, I never cared about your smile or your kids. I never cared about your rate sheet. I never cared about the fact you could close a loan in five, 15, 17, or 21 days. And most of all, I never cared about the gimmicks you used to acquire my business. The only thing I cared about as a top producing real estate agent was impacting my net bottom line and impacting my clients’ lives.

So there you were devising a marketing plan to obtain my business. It was consistently short with an unreal value and perception of value. So what to do? First, the loan officer of the new millennium needs to understand the plight of the real estate agent. Survival of the fittest is the new “by” word and the fittest means having the technological savvy to maintain a presence in the client’s eyes where technology giant would like to tread. It has been proposed that giant would like to gain access to our market by going consumer direct with a fancy, national MLS and with affinity relationships that control the majority of the total real estate sphere of transactions.

As this is convenient for clients, it has also proven to be a “take a number,” reduced price, low service, and lower rung representation by real estate agents. This type of service consistently does not produce referrals, repeat clients, or glowing stories at cocktail parties. The top real estate agents in the new millennium will rise above the Wal-Mart type services offered by the technology giants and use their intimate knowledge of the neighborhoods and the movers and shakers that live within, to create relationships and therefore repeat and return business.
The top producing real estate agent, like any other provider of service, is likely to have the first contact with the potential buyer or seller and therefore has the first opportunity to impact the direction of the transaction.

It is the top real estate that understands this, stays current, and applies effectiveness through technology and delegation. The squeeze on my business, which is the real estate agents side, is being felt. In concert with this however, we are finding that the agents that can’t compete are leaving the business. Therefore, we are setting up the war between the technological giants who can provide many services at the lowest cost with the independent, boutique, super agent who understands relationships and intimate local knowledge.

Who, as a loan officer, do you think you will be most likely to receive business from?

Obviously, the technology giants will have affinity relationships that may not include your company. However, the local mega-real estate agent, who as we stated earlier is only interested in net bottom line production and client “impactfulness,” will want the hungry, eye-of-the-tiger, loan officer who understands how to facilitate these desires.

In a series of articles, I am going to provide you with step-by-step plans on how to segregate the top producing real estate agents, determine their survival rate, develop telemarketing and direct mail campaigns to catch their eye, and walk you through a complete personal presentation that will blow their socks off. Following up with consistent idea giving and team “partnershipping” will prove to them your desire to move the team to the next level.

The top producing real estate agent, like any other provider of service, is likely to have the first contact with the potential buyer or seller and therefore has the first opportunity to impact the direction of the transaction. The transaction being which affiliated services will be used. The client has the ability to obtain these services by way of the Internet, technological giants, or their local mega-producing real estate agent who provides a customizes, personal, interactive, belly-to-belly service.

It would be my bet that the survival rate among top producing real estate agents will be supported by the top echelon of potential buyers and sellers. Therefore, the relationship-building skills you have with the top real estate agents are paramount. My survival rate will be consistent with my ability to give personalized service to my clientele. This makes demand for personal services from you in the areas of client communication, lead generation, follow-up, data-base management, and people skills more important than your ability to provide me with excellent loan rates at phenomenal delivery dates. Remember, I can receive the same promises for loans over the Internet, but that is not my goal. My goal is to impact my clients and therefore, their personal interaction with you will build the perception of a total package of services from the real estate agent. This will go a long way in creating the return business and referral business that is paramount to my business.

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By Bill Brooks

Studies show that most people approach a buying decision with some level of anxiety. The truth is, they really don’t want to have to make a decision. Believe it or not, your prospects are very often looking for an excuse not to satisfy a need or want. The decision-making process is just too stressful for them.

What does that mean for you? Your job as a sales professional is to help your prospects overcome this anxiety – their desire to avoid making a decision – and commit to satisfying their needs or wants with YOUR product or service.

So how do you do it? There are two keys here:

You’ve got to ask the right questions….everyone knows that.

However, in training thousands of salespeople every year, we’ve found that salespeople talk their way out of more sales than they listen their way into.

Salespeople who talk instead of listen tend to lose sales because they let their focus slip: They start thinking about what they want to have happen instead of what their prospects want to have happen.

You’ve got to listen to your prospect’s responses to your questions carefully so that your follow-up questions keep the focus where it needs to be – on that prospect and what he or she wants to have happen.

In this article, we’re going to look at 10 tips that will help you ask the right questions and keep your focus on your prospect.

Questioning Tip #1. Prepare, in advance, the questions you will ask.

Of course, every prospect is unique and every selling situation requires some variation, but certain basic questions that come up in every interview can be planned in advance. By carefully planning your basic questions, you can make sure you
cover all bases and that your wording will be precise. Here are some examples:

- What about the product/service is most important to you?
- Have you seen anything else on the market that you especially don’t like?
- What do you most want to have happen as a result of using this product/service?

I do have one caution: Be careful not to phrase them so they sound canned.

**Questioning Tip #2.** Open the sale with a good question.

The best way to open a sale is with a question. If you’re calling on someone, always ask, “Is this a good time for you?” And always ask your prospect, “In order to be of service to you, do you mind if I ask you a few questions?”

If they have the time, people will almost always answer “yes” to that second question. Whether or not that leads to a sale depends almost entirely on how good your follow-up questions are and how good you are at listening to the answers.

**Questioning Tip #3.** Ask open-ended and indirect questions.

Closed questions that call for a “yes” or “no” answer tend to discourage people from talking, to give only limited information, and to set a negative tone. Instead, you should ask open-ended questions that require prospects to tell you how they feel, what they want, or what they think. For example, you may ask something along the lines of, “How would you describe your current situation (with or without this product/service)?”

The answer will tell the observant sales professional a great deal – including what benefits of their offering to emphasize.

**Questioning Tip #4.** Ask need-development questions.

When you are in the questioning phase of the sale, you want to do more than get the prospect to talk – you want that prospect to tell you what he or she needs. Therefore, frame questions that will give you insights into how prospects perceive their needs. You may ask, for example, “What would your primary use be for this product/service?”

**Questioning Tip #5.** Ask questions that help you identify dominant needs.

Usually there is one, single overriding need in the prospect’s mind – a need you can pinpoint by asking the right questions. You may ask,

- “What would you most like to change about your present situation?”
- “What would it mean for you if you could improve your current situation?”

**Questioning Tip #6.** Ask questions that help you pinpoint the dominant buying motivations.

Buying motivations and needs are not always the same. Buying motivations have to do with desires, feelings, tastes, and so on. Needs are logical, fact-based, and tangible. Buying motivations are more emotional and intangible. And the truth is, people tend to buy what they need from you when they see that you understand what they really WANT.

You can find out what motivates your buyer – what he or she wants – by asking what kind of similar products or services they’ve used in the past. Even if all they give you is a list, you at least learn what they like, or are familiar with. Often, however, people will talk about one or two experiences that were particularly well received. That knowledge will tell you exactly what benefits to emphasize most.

**Questioning Tip #7.** Avoid offensive questions or asking questions in an insensitive way.

This may seem obvious, but some salespeople make this mistake because they make assumptions about the prospect. Some questions can offend a prospect and cause them to back away from you.

Don’t ever use leading or “setup” questions such as, “You do want your children to have a fair chance, don’t you?” What is the prospect going to say? “No! Let them tough it out!”?

Nosy, or overly personal questions can be a real turnoff. Stick to business!

It’s always a good idea to avoid explosive subjects like religion, politics, race, and deep personal issues. Bonding on a personal level can help cement a sale but as a professional you want to keep the interview focused on the business at hand.

Sometimes your manner can be threatening. Instead of asking, “How much do you want to spend?” why not phrase it, “How much had you planned to invest?”

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I hope you understand that return and repeat business is the least expensive lead generation that I potentially have. The lead generation business that you hear so much about (for sale by owners, expireds, past client data bases, non-owner occupieds, first time buyers, and various other methods) has become the most expensive method of maintaining a real estate business. Therefore, your services now, acting in concert with the team, will be required to build a total perception that facilitates return and repeat business.

The potential buyer or seller who comes to me looks at the product first and financing later. The people who sell the concept of financing first and product later will soon find that the same poor numbers are generated from banks and savings and loans that advertise, “Come see us first for a car loan before you go look for your car!” It’s product first, relationship second, and delivering the financing third. It is the top real estate agent who will be put in the position of being able to provide that service first.

Your only question remains “How do I effect the top real estate agent in my town?” My answer is, “Learn the real estate business!” Any top salesperson knows that the fastest way to provide a market for a product is to make sure that product provides solutions to my day-to-day business. This means understanding my business. If you were selling copiers to a pharmaceutical company, you would pour over the company’s financial statements and annual reports to determine the potential need for your product. The same goes for your potential real estate agents. After identifying them as potential or realistic top “elephant agents,” ask the appropriate questions to find out what the greatest needs are that can be supplied by you-the loan officer.

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Questioning Tip #8. Start with broad questions, and then move toward questions with a narrower focus.

Broad questions are usually less threatening and yield general information. Thus, they can help you get things rolling and steer you in the right direction. Your prospects may know, for example, that they want your product/service, but they don’t always know what specifics of your offering would work best for them.

Prospects who call us, for example, tend to know they’re looking for help in improving their organization’s sales, but they don’t always know the details of how our training programs are assembled. Why would they? It’s up to us to ask the prospect questions and find out what the best course of action is for them.

Not until your probing becomes more comfortable and picks up speed should you start asking more specific questions that allow the prospect to mentally take ownership of your product or service.

Questioning Tip #9. Ask questions that are easy to answer.

Questions that require knowledge the prospect doesn’t have can often make a person feel dumb and reinforce his or her natural state of anxiety and discomfort in making the decision to buy or commit to a purchase.

Here’s a broad example: Computer salespeople who ask a prospect what kind of memory they’re looking for usually get a blank stare or silence over the phone. As Dell computer salespeople know well, a better question would be, “What do you plan on using the machine for?” If a person says, “Gaming, video conferencing and media storage,” the salesperson knows this prospect is going to need a boatload of memory. If the prospect says, “email, home file management and surfing the web,” the salesperson knows a smaller amount of memory will work.

Try asking questions that don’t depend on the prospect’s technical knowledge. If they use jargon and technical speak that’s one thing, but just because you’re an expert doesn’t mean they are. The smarter you make your prospects feel, the smarter they’ll think you are and the better they’ll like you.

Questioning Tip #10. Ask—then shut up and listen.
The prospect can’t talk while you’re talking. Besides, you can’t learn while you’re talking. Don’t just get quiet and think up something to say next; listen to and analyze every word that prospect says.

Remember: You can’t talk people into buying, but you can listen them into it. Questions are your greatest selling tool. The better you become at asking questions, the easier it will become for you to sell.

CEO of The Brooks Group, Bill Brooks is a world-renowned expert on hiring, sales management, business development, and sales. He is the author of 17 books, including How to Sell at Margins Higher Than Your Competitors (with Lawrence L. Steinmetz, Ph.D.; 2004, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.). © 2008, Bill Brooks. All rights reserved. For information about how to bring Bill to your next meeting or convention, contact the FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email susie@FrogPond.com; http://www.FrogPond.com.
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