

*The Dean Jackson*

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# Here's What's Inside...

## **Section 1: How to get more prospects!**

1. Here's what to do before you spend money on any direct response ad
2. Here's a seven-step checklist for writing ads that can make you rich!
3. Here's exactly how to select a target market so you can really understand them and create compelling offers they can't refuse!
4. Think *Baby Steps* for maximum response to your direct response ads
5. How to write headlines that compel your prospects to take action now!
6. A step-by-step plan to educate and motivate your prospects to call you...
7. How to write ads, letters and postcards that make your prospects take action
8. Here's how to write all the free reports you'll ever need for your business...
9. Help! I ran one of those direct response ads and I didn't get any calls!
10. Help! I ran a direct response ad that got 100 calls – now what?
11. Top 10 ways to generate as many leads for first-time buyers as you can possibly handle...
12. How to turn your leads into lifetime clients

## **Section 2: How to get more referrals!**

13. Do you know exactly what to say in the first 30-seconds you meet someone?
14. The Loyalty Effect: The hidden force behind growth, profits, and lasting value
15. 7 ways to build trust with your communications...
16. The amazing power of telling the truth
17. How to get your suppliers to refer you more business by teaching them to fish

18. How to generate leads while delivering world class service
19. How do you decide whether someone is your kind of prospect?
20. Want more advocates? Try nurturing lifetime relationships first instead of last...
21. What to do in the first 90-days after the celebration to start nurturing a lifetime relationship with your clients
22. Here's how to get all the testimonials you'll ever need... and what to do with them once you get them!

## **Section 3: How to organize your business!**

23. Is overchoice keeping you average? Here's how to narrow your focus, choose your customers, and learn when to say no!
24. Here's a simple way to organize your business around it's three key functions...
25. Here's a new way to think about your before, during and after divisions...
26. Here's a simple 30-day plan to get started with results, remodel & recovery days
27. Five important lessons you can learn from the biggest brand building companies in the world...
28. Want an easy way to get things done? Try playing G.O.L.F.
29. How to turn six sheets of paper, an egg timer and a ball point pen into your best year ever...

## **Section 4: How to create a money making website!**

30. Your website is not a personal brochure! Here's how to turn your website into an automated lead generation magnet for your business...
31. Five little things that make a good website great! Why settle for average when amazing can be this easy?
32. Here's a 4-step formula for building an awesome lead generating website...
33. Five easy ways to start using e-mail to grow your business...

# **Section 1**

## **How To Get More Prospects!**

## Chapter 1

# Here's What To Do Before You Spend Money On Any Direct Response Ad...

Before you spend your money on any form of advertising looking for new customers there are some things you should do first to make sure you get the most from your marketing dollars.

### **1. Know your outcome**

Every aspect of your marketing needs a specific objective, including your direct response marketing. The very first thing you should do before you start to run any direct response ads is figure out what you want your outcome to be. Unlike running property ads where your outcome is to try and sell that one house, using direct response ads with a free report offer is a system that will bring you a constant stream of new prospects. In order for it to be effective you need to know what you are trying to achieve so you can set the system up accordingly.

Your objective is going to vary depending on the number of years you've been in business, how many current and past customers you've got, how many inquiries you've generated in the last several months from your other advertising and marketing efforts, etc.

If today is your very first day in business, the two most likely sources of business (current and inactive customers) are not available to you. So you'll have to spend more time generating leads and will have to concentrate on making the most of your direct response system.

So decide how many transactions you want to generate before you even start. If you want to generate one or two transactions a month, you'll approach this differently than if your objective is to generate six or eight transactions, but just knowing what your outcome is will help give you clarity.

### **2. Create a mental picture of your great and sometimes great prospect**

One of the best things you can do is know what the ideal prospect looks like for you. So you'll know what they look like when you find them. When you start running direct response ads you'll get calls from people who are going to range anywhere from unqualified, unmotivated tire kickers to highly motivated, have-to-move-right-now shoppers.

Define the qualifications of that person and how you'll know when you've found one early in the process. Design questions you can ask to find out if your prospect is great or sometimes great as quickly as possible, so you don't have to spend as much time figuring it out once you start getting leads.

If your objective is to find two or three first-time buyers you can work with each month, you'll be able to set up your whole system around finding that ideal person.

### **3. Set up your system so you're ready when people start calling on your ads**

The biggest complaint I hear when people first start experimenting with direct response advertising is, "I ran a direct response ad and got 87 calls and I never did anything with them." If you run a good direct response ad for a free report, you WILL get calls. Lots of them. So you need to be prepared to handle them when they do come in.

You need to have your voice mail service in place and the message set up, decide who is going to take the leads off the voice mail every day, who is going to send the reports and how you are going to follow up with the leads. The one thing you need to be able to do is identify out of the group of people that call, which ones are going to be your best prospects and focus all of your time on those people.

Believe it or not, most people who call on your ads are not going to be your ideal prospect. So don't get overwhelmed by the number of leads you get and feel like you have to follow up with every one of them forever. Set up your system to make it easy to identify the best prospects and direct all your efforts to helping them.

### **4. Talk to your current customers first**

Most of the time people forget that the best place to look for great customers is by asking your current customers if they have any friends, relatives or co-workers who would benefit from your free report. Ask them early and ask them often who's the next person they know that is going to be buying or selling a home. Let them know about this free report you've created so they can tell their friends about it.

Create a library of free reports that your current customers have available for their friends and encourage them to let their friends know about them.

### **5. Talk to your inactive customers and sphere of influence second**

Every time you create a new report you can make the equivalent of a press release to your inactive customers and sphere of influence.

It could be an evidence of success postcard that says:

*Dear friend,*

*Just a quick note to let you know how I might help you or anyone you would refer to me. I have just completed a free report called "How to buy a home in Springfield with zero down payment." This report is full of great advice for first time homebuyers and lets them know about all the different zero down home loans that are readily available, but that the banks will never tell them about. If you know anyone who is going to be buying their first home, they can get a copy of this free report by calling 1-800-555-5555 for a 24-hr free recorded message. Thanks for your help.*

Now sending out that kind of a postcard to everyone in your database will get you calls from people who are predisposed to using you, because they've been referred.

## **6. Talk to your prospects third**

Remember all those people that called on the last direct response ad you ran? Or the people who have been calling on your signs and property ads for the past six months. The ones in that pile with the rubber band around it in your top drawer that you are just waiting to get around to? Those people may be your best prospects and you don't even know it.

One way to approach this is to mail them an offer for your new free report and see who identifies themselves as prospects. You can mail them a post card just like the one you sent to your sphere of influence and inactive customers making the same offer and follow up with the ones who respond – raising their hand to tell you they are a good prospect to follow up with.

## **7. Run direct response ads last**

Now that you've done all of the steps above – you are ready to start running direct response ads. Only now, you've had some experience in handling the incoming calls. Sending out the reports and identifying who the best prospects are. You may find that you are able to reach your objective each month by connecting with your current customers, inactive customers and your prospects, and don't even need to do the advertising.

So before you spend your money on ads looking for new prospects, go through these seven steps first and you'll multiply the cost effectiveness of your lead generation program.

## Chapter 2

# Here's A Seven-Step Checklist For Writing Ads That Can Make You Rich!

Here is a step-by-step process you can go through every time you sit down to write a direct response ad, to make sure that you have all the elements that will make the ad as profitable for you as possible. Refer to this checklist before and after you write your ad, and ask yourself these questions.

### 1. Who is my Target Market?

When you look at your ad, can you tell very specifically who your target market is? Most of the time, when you look through real estate magazines, you see ads that say “**Thinking of buying or selling? Call me first!**” or other non-compelling catch phrases. What is very clear by this is that the person has not selected a very specific target market, and is just trying to appeal to everyone at the same time.

The most effective ads you can write are very specifically focused on a SINGLE TARGET MARKET. It's not enough to say that your target market is buyers or sellers. You have to really narrow your focus even more.

A great target market would be *renters who are living in the Oakwood apartment complex and paying more than \$550 a month in rent*. The more specific you can get the better. It will allow you to understand who your target market is and what they hope for and fear in their situation.

### 2. Do I have a Compelling offer?

The offer is the key thing in a direct response ad. The offer is the reason they will be responding. What are they going to get be responding to your ad. Offers can be a FREE recorded message, a FREE report by mail or e-mail, a seminar, an over the phone consultation, or a personal one-on-one consultation in their home or your office.

Now, not all offers are going to get the same response, many more people will call and listen to a FREE recorded message, while not many people will be as interested in a one-on-one consultation just from seeing your ad. You've always got to be thinking in terms of baby-steps to lead your prospects.

### **3. Does my headline tell the complete story?**

The headline is the first thing everyone reading your ad will see when they look at your ad. The most effective thing you can do is be sure your headline tells the complete story. Think of your headline as the ad for your ad.

The headline is the only thing your prospects will use to determine whether they'll spend the time to read your ad, and if it doesn't catch their attention with something that is of value to them – they'll skip right over your ad and be on to the next page.

When people look at your ad, can they tell what it's about just by reading the headline? Have a friend look at the headline alone and if they can't tell you exactly what the ad is about, you need to go back to the drawing board.

Here's a couple of tips for writing winning headlines: first, pretend that you are writing a three-line classified ad for your ad. This will help you to really get your point across. Second, look on the cover and in the table of contents of *Cosmo* magazine to get ideas for great headlines.

### **4. Does it look like an ad?**

One of the worst things you can do is have a great idea for an ad, a great headline and offer, and then make your ad LOOK like an ad! When you make your ad look like news you will get FIVE TIMES as many people to look at your ad! That's because five times as many people read editorial content and screen out the ads. So if your ad has starbursts and a big glamour shot of you (from 10 years ago) and your big logo etc. People are going to see through it and tune out.

To give your message the best chance of being seen and read, take a copy of USA Today, or your local newspaper and find an article that looks to be about the same size as the ad you're running and make your ad look EXACTLY like that newspaper article.

### **5. Have I used a conversational one-on-one tone?**

When you're writing your ads, always keep in mind that you are talking to ONE prospect at a time. Even though your ad will be seen by thousands of people, when they are reading it, they're reading it ALONE. Talk to them just like you would talk to them one-one-one. Conversationally. Explaining your offer to them as if you were sitting down with them.

Don't worry about talking to anyone other than your prospect. Talk only to them in a way that demonstrates your understanding of their exact situation, and how your offer can help them get what they want – while avoiding what they don't want!

### **6. Is it absolutely clear what I'm asking them to do?**

This is an important point because when you look through most ads in the real estate magazines, you see Realtors and lenders with every phone number they have. They've got their office number, their home number, their out-of-town number, their cellular number, and what it's making your prospect think is "I'm going to have to track this person down!"

Your ad should not confuse your prospects, it should be very clear what they need to do. Your ad should lead them conversationally right through to the end and tell them exactly what to do to get the benefit you are offering them.

## **7. Have I used the words “FREE Recorded Message”?**

If there were any such thing as Magic Words in marketing, the words FREE Recorded Message would be the ones. The words FREE Recorded Message will do more for your response than anything else, and you should use them in every ad you write.

Those words convey to your client that it's absolutely safe for them to call and take the next step without having to talk to a salesperson, and it gets them on the road to meeting with you one-on-one. So even if your offer is a seminar or free consultation, you'll always increase your response by having your prospects call a FREE recorded message first!

So there you have it. A seven-point checklist you can use every time you create direct response ads. Use this checklist, come on the ad clinics and you'll have a very profitable year!

## Chapter 3

# Here's Exactly How To Select a Target Market So You Can Really Understand Them And Create Compelling Offers They Can't Refuse!

Selecting a target market can be as simple as saying, “I think I’m going to work with buyers...” But, follow these simple steps and you’ll turn a vague decision into a precision mission!

### **Selecting a target market involves answering and understanding three questions**

- Who are they?
- Where do they live now?
- Why are they moving?

When you can answer those three questions about your target market, you’ll be able to take that information and create offers that compel them to call you. So let’s start from the beginning and go through the process step by step.

### **Question #1: Who are they?**

Think narrow. Think specific. Think visually.

The more you can identify and get a clear mental picture of *one person* who is representative of your target market the better. It’s not enough to just say buyers, sellers or borrowers. You need to take a very specific focus on this process. Lets use an example of buyers and take it all the way through this exercise.

Ok. So we know we want to attract buyers, but what kind of buyers?

Are you looking for first time buyers, move-up buyers. Move in buyers. Luxury home buyers. Country property buyers. Retirement buyers.

The reason it's so important to select a narrow target market is because each buyer has a very different need and is in a very different life situation. A first time buyer is a completely different person than a person who is buying a home for retirement. Getting a visual picture of that target market helps you identify with them and get a real sense of who they are.

First time homebuyers for example will most likely be single or married, between 25 and 35 years old, paying rent between \$500 and \$1000. When you think of it that way, it helps you get a clear picture of them.

Retirement buyers will most likely be 55-70 with grown children and little or no mortgage. When you visualize it like that, you can get a better feeling for who your target market is. Whenever I sit down to write any ad or sales letter, I always take the time to get a very clear mental picture of exactly who my target market is, so I can mentally talk to that person.

## **Question #2: Where are they now?**

Once you have a clear picture of WHO your target market is, the next step is to physically locate WHERE they are. If your target is first time homebuyers, they are either living in apartment complexes, renting a house from an individual or living at home.

Since it's harder to identify renters living at home, or renting from an individual, you can narrow your focus on apartment complexes that rent for \$500 - \$1000 a month. (Or whatever amount would make it easy for someone to own a home for the same amount they are paying in rent.)

So let's say that your research has identified 12 apartment complexes that have rents of \$500 - \$1000 and a total of 2500 units. If you can get a list of the apartment addresses in a database, you can keep that list forever as an asset you can use again and again.

If those apartment complexes are where first time buyers are living NOW, it's where the first time buyers will be living 2 years from now, 5 years from now, and probably 10 - 20 years from now. Some quick math will tell you that if renters on average rent for 5 years before they buy, then 20% of them will be ready to move each year -- that means somewhere around 500 of those 2500 apartment renters will buy a home this year. That's a big enough market to invest significant effort into tapping!

The retirement buyers are not quite as easy to identify, but they're probably living in 4 and 5 bedroom family homes. They've probably been there 15-20 years or more and they probably are grandparents. All those parameters can be searched by a list broker to give you a high probability targeted list of homeowners who fit that description in any zip code you'd like.

Locating where your target market lives gives you an even better understanding of them. It's one more element to develop the empathy you need to get into their heads and create compelling offers for them. It creates an even clearer mental image of them.

## **Question #3: Why are they moving (or NOT moving)?**

In selecting your target market, it's not enough to know WHO they are and WHERE they are. You need to be able to understand what their hopes and goals are, and what their fears and apprehensions are.

One thing that most people overlook when thinking about why people move, is why people DON'T move. It's just as important to know why people aren't making a move. Why they wait. What they are afraid of.

If you can identify what's holding someone back from making a move, and shift their paradigm with some new information, you'll be able to compel more of them to call you. And when they do call you, they'll be grateful to you for changing their lives.

The principle of plenty will tell you that right now, among those 2500 apartment renters are people who would love to buy a home, but they think you need to have ten thousand dollars or more to do it. They'd love to own a home, and dream about someday being able to get out of paying rent, and more importantly they'd do it right NOW if they knew they could buy a home with zero or a low downpayment and have payments around what they're paying in rent.

**So why aren't they moving? They don't know it's possible!**

That's your job when you are selecting your target market. Whatever your target market. Spend time really thinking about your target market. The time you spend researching and thinking about your prospects will help you really understand them, and it's the foundation of creating compelling offers that will have them lining up to work with you!

## Chapter 4

# Think *Baby Steps* For Maximum Response To Your Direct Response Ads

One of the most frustrating things that can happen with direct response ads is running an ad that nobody calls on. One of the reasons this may happen is that you are asking your prospect to take too big a step at one time.

Sometimes I'll see that what Realtors and Lenders are asking people to do is come in for a "free pre-approval" or "free market evaluation." Both of those are pretty big steps for someone to take when they are first entering the process of buying or selling a home. Remember, your prospects are afraid. The more you are aware of that, you can soften the steps they need to take and remember, baby steps.

**Check out this hierarchy of commitments for a prospect.**

### **Personal Consultation**

The hardest step to get someone to take is to meet with you one on one in their home or your office. There will be fewer people who will take you up on this kind of offer because it is out of their comfort zone. Especially when they don't know you, or are not sure of what they are going to do.

So if you are using a direct response ad offering people a free market analysis of their home or a free pre-approval, and they have to meet you in person to get it, try taking one step back and offering a free...

### **Over The Phone Consultation**

This sounds a little less threatening. Your prospect can get the information they want, and not have to meet with you *yet*. More people will be open to taking that kind of step with you, especially if they want the information. You can offer a service to "**Find out what your home is worth for free – over the phone.**" Or "**Find out how much home you can afford for free – over the phone.**"

### **Free Seminar**

An even softer step than talking to you on the phone is to come to a free seminar to get your information. More people will be willing to come and sit with a group of people than will talk to you

one-on-one over the phone. It seems safer to them. They can hide in the crowd, and they won't have to answer questions they don't know the answer to, or they can slip in and slip out.

### **Free Report by Mail**

One of the safest things your prospect can do is to have you send them more information by mail. This is a very soft step for them to take, and because of that, more people will take advantage of it. You will have their name and address and you can follow up with them by mail until they are ready to take the next step.

### **Free Recorded Message**

*The absolutely least threatening, and easiest to take first step for your prospect is to call a 24 hour free recorded message.* This is the step that will get you the most responses, and will improve your direct response ads like you wouldn't believe. Even if you ultimately want them to meet with you, don't mention that in your ad.

Offer a free recorded message and then you can explain your offer fully to them in your own voice. They can hear your tone, get the information they need to make a decision to take the next step or they can choose not to take the next step. No matter what your offer is, you will get more response by making the very first step they have to take as painless as possible. Once you get them walking in your direction, your only goal is to get them to take the next baby step, and the next baby step.

So if you've been trying direct response ads that are getting less response than you would like, try softening the steps. If you are offering a free consultation in their home or your office, try softening that to an over the phone consultation. If you are running seminars, try offering a free report and have the next step be the seminar.

No matter what your offer is, if you aren't using a free recorded message as the very first step you aren't getting the maximum response.

## Chapter 5

# How To Write Headlines That Compel Your Prospects To Take Action Now!

One of my favorite things in the world is to come up with a great headline. I put a lot of time and energy into making sure that each headline I write is going to capture the attention of my target audience and is going to tell my complete story in just a few words.

The headline is the most important thing you can write for any advertisement, and a truly good headline can do the job on it's own. It can get your prospects to make a decision based on the information in the headline only.

A good headline promises a *big benefit* for the reader. The answer to some question or concern they have or the path to some goal they want to achieve, and by learning to communicate in a compelling way in only a few lines you can increase the response to your ads by up to ten times!

### **Want to know where you find great headlines?**

They're everywhere. I love to look at magazines that have great introductions to the articles in their issues. One of my favorites is *Cosmo* magazine. They always have great headlines. I also love the *Weekly World News*. In fact one of the most successful ads I've ever collaborated on came directly from the *Weekly World News*.

Now when I say directly – I mean it was directly *adapted* from a headline that was on an article in that magazine. The article was entitled “Why men take so long to commit – and what to do about it.”

Which my friend and I turned into “Why Dayton Homes Take So Long To Sell and What To Do About It.” One of our consulting clients ran the ad in the local homes magazine and got 7 call-in listings. People read the ad and just called her up to come and list their house.

Adapting headlines like that is a great way to get started when you are writing ads.

### **Here's how to steal great headlines.**

Go to the grocery store and get a copy of the *Weekly World News* and *Cosmo* magazine. Turn to the inside cover of *Cosmo* and look at the titles of the articles. When I do that with my current issue of *Cosmo* the first headline that jumps out at me is “10 Reasons why your workout isn't working.”

This could turn into “10 Reasons Why Your House Isn’t Selling” or “10 Reasons Why You Can’t Find The House You *Really* Want”. Both of these are good headlines and could be written as ads or run as classifieds in the local newspaper.

One of the best places to test headlines is in the classifieds, and if you’re going to be writing your headlines it’s not a bad idea to pretend you’re writing a classified ad because it forces you to get to the point in only 2 or 3 lines.

Can you imagine a homebuyer looking through the classifieds -- *scouring* the classifieds for just the right house? Then they come across an ad that says. “**10 reasons why you can’t find the house you really want. Free recorded message 1-800-888-8888.**”

Does that headline arouse your curiosity? If you were looking for a house faithfully every day in the paper looking for just that right house and you found that ad and it was a free recorded message, you’d *have* to call because it’s speaking directly to you.

Keep in mind that the only purpose of your ad is to generate a call. It’s not supposed to convince people to list their house with you, or get a mortgage with you. It’s just supposed to arouse their curiosity enough that they want to call and listen to your free-recorded message.

**Here are some great headline-starters that you can use to create awesome headlines.**

**How To [Get a big benefit or solve a big problem]**

How To Sell Your House In Less Than 90 Days Guaranteed.

How To Get Pre-Approved For A Mortgage *Before* You Make An Offer On A Home.

How To Avoid The 10 *Dumbest* Mistakes Smart People Make When They Buy A Home.

**[10] ways to [ insert a big benefit ]**

10 Ways To Make Sure Your House Sells For Top Dollar.

10 Ways To Save Money When You Get A Mortgage.

10 Ways To Fix Up Your Home For Under \$100.

**Why [insert a big problem] and what to do about it.**

Why Nobody Bought Your House -- And What To Do About It.

Why The Bank May Turn *You* Down For A Mortgage -- And What To Do About It.

Why You Can’t Find The House You *Really* Want – And What To Do About It.

OK. Here’s your homework assignment: go to the grocery store and get a copy of *The Weekly World News* and *Cosmo* magazine and scan the contents of the magazines for great headline ideas that you can turn into winning headlines.

## Chapter 6

# A Step-by-Step Plan To Educate And Motivate Your Prospects To Call You...

Of course you want to set up an automatic lead generation system, and of course you want it to be as profitable as possible. Using a Direct Response System that includes FREE reports is very similar to using the APS system with voice mail, in that it includes using “baby-steps” to inch people towards you.

### **Step one of course, is generating a lead**

When you are generating a lead, all you want to do is get someone to raise their hand and tell you they’re interested in receiving what you are offering. In order to do that, you have to carefully think through what you are going to OFFER your prospects to compel them to call you.

### **Here are the most common offers:**

- Free Recorded Message
- Free Report by Mail
- Free Seminar
- Free Over The Phone Consultation
- Free Market Analysis or Pre-Approval

Now, most people when they start out are trying to get the prospect to do too much. They’re asking them to come in to the office for a pre-approval, or to let you come to their house and give them a “market evaluation.”

My friend, Dr. Jeffrey Lant (Author of several books, including *Cash Copy* – available at the By Referral Only book store), makes the comparison of educating and motivating prospects to trying to get squirrels to follow you in the park.

If you go to the park with your bag of potato chips (the benefit you are offering) and shake your bag and yell “Here Squirrels, I’ve got some great treats for you in my bag here!” The squirrels will run and hide.

Yet if you start out with a gentle voice and lay some of your potato chips on the ground in front of you, they'll come out of hiding...make sure the coast is clear, and slowly advance toward the chips you've laid out for them. They'll eat the chips and be looking for more.

Using this step-by-step method of gaining their trust, you can literally lay a trail of potato chips all the way around the park and they will follow you anywhere, eventually eating the chips right out of your hand.

Motivating prospects is no different.

Your prospects are as frightened of you as the squirrels. Even though you've got great things to offer them in your bag, you have to slowly win their trust by offering them a small sample on a RISK-FREE BASIS.

That's why no matter what you're offering, you should always start out with offering a FREE RECORDED MESSAGE. Then you can motivate your prospects to take the next step and leave their name, telephone, number and address, so you can send them your free report, or information on your free seminar, or your over the phone evaluation.

Remember, you're not looking for everyone, and just because someone calls your hotline and listens to your free-recorded-message doesn't mean they are a prospect. They're still suspects at this time.

**You must have a system for determining who the great prospects are out of all the prospects who call you.**

If you are looking for shoppers, you need a motivating script that will get them to take the next action – to call you directly and find out about your homefinder service. As a rule of thumb, if you've got a great script (you should definitely be using one of the scripts that are already done for you on the Real Time Marketing Library) about 10% of the people who listen to your message will call through to you.

Now, what about the other 90%?

If you are offering an interim step to calling you directly, like leaving their name and address for a free report, you will increase the number of people who "respond" to maybe 20 or 30%. This is a great way to build a longer term (90-days to 6-months) pipeline of prospects, but again, all the people who leave their name and number are not going to be great prospects. You need to have a system in place to identify which are the gems, and which are not.

*The best way to do this is to set up a systematic approach to following-up with them either by phone, mail or e-mail.*

You can easily do this by mailing your evidence of success post-cards, your monthly client newsletter, and periodic special offers like a free seminar for first time homebuyers. It doesn't cost very much to keep in touch with them once or twice a month. And, It's free if you're using e-mail! That's why you should always ask for email addresses from your prospects. The key is to give them opportunities to contact you when they're ready.

You'll be surprised at how profitable this addition to your APS will be. It just takes a system to do it, and you'll find that for every 100 people you have in your pipeline, an additional three to five will pop out every month as shoppers.

## Chapter 7

# How To Write Ads, Letters and Postcards That Make Your Prospects Take Action

Writing copy that gets people to take action is one of the most valuable skills you can master. Here are a few simple thoughts to remember when you sit down to write any ad, letter or postcard that will make a big difference in the response that you get.

### 1. Don't Write About YOU -- Write About Your Prospect!

People are primarily self centered. We're completely obsessed with ourselves, and we think about ourselves more than anything else -- it's our default setting.

I conducted a little experiment at a Main Event in Denver a couple of years ago. People were coming to me at the back of the room to have me critique their ads and brochures. Usually the brochures were very nice to look at, but they were almost always personal promotion brochures. You've seen the ones with a big picture of the agent on the front, and inside are pictures of them with their family, riding a bike, sitting at their desk on the phone or standing in front of a sold sign.

I would look at the brochures and get into a conversation about how the brochure would be more effective if it was about the prospect instead of them, and changing the subject, I would start talking about my new pen and hand it to them to try. Of course the first thing they would write would be their own name. (Try this on your friends)

When they were finished, I would ask them why they wrote their name, and they would always say, "It's the first thing that came to my mind." I said, "Exactly! And just like your name is the first thing on YOUR mind, the first thing on your prospect's mind is himself. That's all they are thinking about, and when they see a brochure or an ad that's all about YOU, they know it's not about THEM so they can immediately tune it out."

The lesson in this is that whenever you are writing any kind of ad, letter, postcard or brochure, ALWAYS make it about your prospect and write it from their perspective. *It's not about you and your services, it's about your prospect, their desires, their fears and aspirations.*

It's the difference between a brochure that says, "**How To Sell Your House In Less Than 60 Days – Guaranteed**" and a brochure that has a big picture on the front and the caption, "**Jason Dey...Selling Oklahoma City One Yard At A Time.**"

## **2. Write As If You're Talking To ONE Person**

Even when you write about your prospects and their desires, you still need to write as if you are talking to one person -- your prospect only. Even though your ad is going to be seen by thousands of people, it's going to be read one person at a time. When they're reading, if you've used a conversational tone, you'll have a chance to connect with them and explain your offer in detail. Just like you would explain it to them if you were sitting down with them one on one.

In fact, the best style of writing you can use is a conversational and friendly tone -- As if you are TALKING to them in person. When you're writing, it helps to imagine yourself sitting down in your living room with your best prospect and explaining all the benefits of your offer to them, and how they can reach their goals, while avoiding their worst fears.

Let's say your prospect is a first time buyer who is paying more in rent than mortgage payments on a house would be. You would probably start out conversationally explaining to them that within a two mile radius of where they live right now, there are 87 homes that they could buy with no money down and have mortgage payments of less than what they're already paying in rent. You'd tell them the reasons why they can do this, how you know about it and why they haven't heard about it before. You'd probably explain to them that it's not just for veterans and that anyone with a steady job and a record of paying their bills on time would qualify.

So next time you sit down to write an ad or a letter, imagine yourself sitting in the same room with your best prospect, and just start TALKING.

## **3. Be Clear About What You're Asking Them To Do And Make It EASY To Respond**

After you've conversationally explained everything about how they can buy a home, they're convinced they can do it and they're excited about it, you've got to make it absolutely clear to them EXACTLY what they need to do next. It's not enough to do a great job explaining your offer, answering their unspoken questions and compelling them to want to take action, you've got to make it clear what they need to do next.

If the next step is to call and listen to a free recorded message, then tell them exactly what number to call. If you'd like to send them a free report, tell them exactly what they need to do to get it. If you're having a seminar, tell them how to get free tickets. You're job isn't done until you've successfully helped your prospect all the way through to the next step.

Of course, no matter what you're offer is, you'll ALWAYS get more response by using the words FREE RECORDED MESSAGE in your ad, because it lowers your prospects barriers of resistance. Even if you're offering a seminar, or you ultimately want them to call you directly, you'll always get more response when your prospects feel it's safe for them to call without having to talk to a salesperson.

Remember those three simple things when you sit down to write your next ad, postcard, letter or voicemail script and you'll see a big difference in your response.

## Chapter 8

# Here's How To Write All The FREE Reports You'll Ever Need For Your Business...

Free Reports are a very versatile tool that you can use for your business. They are generally 4-8 page information pieces that give your prospects valuable information they want and need to make informed decisions. They can be on any topic that might have some value to your prospects. Sometimes we take for granted the information that we have as common knowledge, because we are so familiar with the topic and we hear about it everyday, but your prospects don't have a clue most of the time.

You can use free reports as the special offer in your direct response ads, in your endorsement letters, in your just listed and just sold postcards, as handouts at a seminar, anywhere that people might like to have the information. Free reports are also a great tool for your clients to use when they are referring you to a friend or co-worker.

The free report is a tool that you can send when you can't be there in person. I like to think of it as your way of sitting down with your prospect one on one and having a conversation with them about the topic. A consulting session. Laying out their options for them and letting them decide what the best thing to do would be.

How do you write them? Doesn't it take a long time? Where do you get the information? Those might be some questions that are going through your mind right now, so, as always, I'm going to give you some step-by-step instructions you can follow to create all the FREE reports you'll ever need for your business.

### **Step #1: Choose a topic that relates to a single target market**

The first thing you need to do is select a single target market that you are going to write your free report for. A target market could be renters who are paying more than \$500 dollars a month in rent. Homeowners that are living in smaller homes or condos and want to buy a bigger house. Homeowners that have a high interest rate and could save money by refinancing now. Any target market that you can identify and that you have special information that they may not know is a great candidate. Just try and match your specialized knowledge to a segment of the market that could benefit by having it.

### **Step #2: Write the headline for your free report first**

Now that you have decided on your target market and the topic you will write about, the first thing you need to do is write the headline. I like to start with the headline first because it gives you an easy way to keep your free report on track – delivering on the promise of the headline. The best headlines for free reports are “How To” headlines. When you start your headline with a how to, it forces you to have a benefit after the words and will let your readers know what they are going to get for reading this report.

So if you’re target market is renters who are paying more than \$500 dollars a month in rent, you might have a headline for your report that says “How To Buy A Home In Springfield For Less Than \$500 A Month.”

### **Step #3: Create an outline for your report**

The biggest secret to writing any free report is the outline. A good outline almost makes the report write itself. If you think in terms of a journalist, what questions would you want to answer in this report? What questions would your prospects probably ask you if you were able to sit down with them one on one?

If you were writing the report for renters they might want to know how much money they needed to have for a downpayment. How much income do I need? Where are these homes located? Think like your prospect because they have all kinds of questions about the topic.

***The most important question you can answer in your report is “What do I do next?”***

You should always answer this question as the last thing in your report. The only purpose of your report is to get your prospect to take the next step, which may be a meeting with you or it may be coming to a seminar or talking to you over the phone. Whatever it is you need to tell your prospect what to do now to get the benefit they have just read about.

### **Step #4: Find an expert who can answer your outline questions (Hint: It might be you!)**

Now that you have an outline of the questions you would like to answer with your report, you need to find the answers. You may have the answers yourself, or you may need to find someone who does. If you are a Realtor writing about low downpayment home loans, or “how to get a yes when you borrow money,” you may want to choose a lender who can answer the questions more clearly than you can.

### **Step #5: Interview your expert and get it on tape**

Once you have found your expert, set up a time with them when you can interview them for 15 minutes over the phone or in person and tape record the expert answering the questions in your outline. If the expert is you, have someone ask you the questions and record your answers. Using this technique is a lot easier than writing the reports and you can get the whole thing done in less than 15 minutes.

### **Step #6: Transcribe the tape**

Now that you have the tape of your interview, take it to a secretarial service and have it transcribed for you. This shouldn’t take them very long and they will be able to give you a hard copy and a copy on disk. When you see it on paper you’ll be amazed at what a great “writer” you are and how conversationally it reads.

## **Step #7: Format your transcript and you've got your free report**

All you need to do now is format the report with a your headline in bold at the top of the page and edit out all the “uhmms and Uhhhs” from the transcript and you've got a great free report you can use to grow your business! Don't worry about making it look fancy or putting graphics or illustrations in it. The important thing is that all the information is there and it makes sense.

This formula makes it easy for you to write all the reports you'll ever need for your business and the best thing is -- you can do it all on one remodel day. Ok. Here's your assignment. Pick a single target market and follow the steps in this article to create just one free report.

## Chapter 9

# “**HELP – I Ran One Of Those Direct Response Ads And I Didn’t Get Any Calls!**”

Here’s how to figure out why...

Lot’s of times I hear from people on the “ad clinics” or at the “Main Events” who tell me “I ran one of those direct response ads and I didn’t get any calls.” When I hear that I immediately go through this checklist with them, and we’re able to figure out why.

### **Who is your target market?**

Many times an ad will be directed to too many people at once, casting as wide a net as possible so as not to leave anybody out. If you are not getting any calls it may be because your ad is not speaking to anyone in particular, but to anyone who is “thinking of buying or selling...”

**When you write your ad, write it to one very specific segment of the market.** Think in terms of renters who are paying more than \$750 a month in rent and living in the Oakbridge Apartment Complex, or homeowners living in the Bridgeview Subdivision in a 2-bedroom home who want to move up to a 3 or 4 bedroom home. The more specifically you can identify your target market, the easier it will be for you to create offers that will be appealing to them.

### **What is your offer?**

A lot of times, I’ll ask people what their offer is and they won’t be able to tell me exactly. They’ll say things like “Well, I just want to get the word out about my services”, or “To let people know that I will treat them special”.

If you don’t have an offer, you need to go back to the drawing board and think of something you can *give* your prospects. Something that will make them want to take action now. Something like a free recorded message on how to use their rent money to buy a home or a free list of homes they can buy within a 3 mile radius of their apartment with zero downpayment and monthly payments the same as they are paying in rent.

### **Does your headline tell the complete story?**

One of the first things I check on the ads that people show me is the headline. I'm looking to see whether I can understand what the ad is about just by reading the headline alone. A good headline is going to tell me everything I need to know to decide if this ad is for me. The headline is the ad for the ad. Here's a good way to think about it. Pretend that you are writing a 3-line classified ad for the same offer you are making in your ad. If you can get the whole point across in those three lines, try using ad as the headline for your ad.

### **Does it look like an ad?**

Here is where a lot of people go astray in using direct response advertising. When I look at their ad they have a big balloon in it, or a rock or a glamour shot of them.

**Your ad should look exactly like a story in the newspaper.** This is maybe the most common mistake I see. There is a good chance that your ad is not working because it *looks* like an ad and people just pass over it. Here's the test – go out and get a copy of USA Today and find an article that is the same size as the ad you are running.

Does your ad look exactly like the article? What about the big bold headline that's aligned to the left and not centered? What about the Times New Roman font they use for the body copy and the columns of print? Does your ad have those things? Do everything you can to make your ad match exactly the layout of the newspaper.

### **Are you talking to them like you would talk to them one on one?**

When you write the copy for your ad, you need to pretend that you are talking to one person at a time. Even though your ad is going to be read by thousands of people – it's going to be read one person at a time. You need to consider your ad your one opportunity to speak directly with your prospect for less than two minutes. What would you say to them if you had the chance to sit down with them one on one and tell them about your offer?

Try to create a mental picture in your mind of sitting down across the table from one of your ideal prospects and write your copy just like you would talk to them. You'll find that your copy is going to be more conversational, more understandable and get more people to take action on your offer.

### **Is it absolutely clear what you are asking them to do?**

This is the point where you have got your prospect really wanting what you have to offer, now you have to make it crystal clear that they are to pick up the phone and dial one specific phone number to get what you are offering. Many times I'll see ads that have an office number, a toll free number, a cellular number and a pager number.

The feeling that this gives people is that they are going to have to track you down. They don't know which is the right number to call, or what is going to happen when they call you. You need to be very specific and eliminate all confusion from your offer to them.

### **Have you made it easy, easy, easy to respond?**

This is one of the most important things you can do in your ad. **Make it easy to respond.**

How do you do that? You get a toll free voice mailbox with a 24hr recorded message that takes all of the calls for you. Don't forget that using the words "FREE recorded Message" will increase your calls by 300% or more.

The reason this is so successful is because it sends a message to people that they can just call and get the information they want, without having to talk to a salesperson or having to answer questions they don't know the answer to. They are in total control, which gives them confidence, which increases the number of people who will call!

So there you have it. If you ran a direct response ad and didn't get any calls, go through this simple checklist and find out why.

## Chapter 10

# “HELP! I Ran A Direct Response Ad That Got 100 Calls – Now What?”

Here’s what to do to maximize your results using a direct response advertising system

The second biggest complaint I hear from people who are new to direct response is “I ran one of those direct response ads and got 100 calls but none of them were *any good*.” Most of the time what they are really saying is, “I ran an ad, I wasn’t prepared for all the response, I sent out the reports and nobody called me back, and I haven’t done anything else.”

When you are using direct response advertising with free reports, it’s just another pillar in your business and you have to know what your outcome is before you even start using it. *Remember, marketing is a process, not an event.*

It’s not about running an ad one time and sending out a hundred free reports. You are using direct response advertising as a way to generate an extra 2 or 3 or more transactions every month, consistently and predictably. Most of the time, when people are having trouble making direct response ads work for them, it’s because they are treating it as an event and not as a process.

**Here are the 3 key elements you need to make it a successful process**

### **1. An Informative Free Report**

The first thing you need to make sure of is that the report you are sending your prospects really does deliver on the promise you made in your ad. If you are getting good response to your ad, it’s because you’ve written compelling copy and they really want what you are offering.

One of the surest ways to not get any responses is to send out a free report that is weak and doesn’t give them the information that you promised. A piece that comes off like you’re a salesperson and not a consultant, or a report that is just not informative or well thought out.

You need to think of your free report as your chance to sit down with one of your best prospects and give them a 15 minute consultation on what they need to do next, and how to get the benefit you are offering.

## **2. A Clear and Compelling Next Step**

The second most common mistake is telling *too much* information in the report and not having a clear and compelling next step. What does that mean? It means that the only purpose of your free report is to educate and motivate your prospect to want to *meet* you. That's it.

If nobody is calling you back after you send out your free report it's because you haven't given them enough of a reason to do it. You haven't motivated them with benefit after benefit for calling you. You may have given them the impression that the only way you could help them is if they are ready to buy or sell their house today or at the latest this weekend.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to find people who are going to do something right now, but the big advantage of using direct response advertising is that you can make contact with people who are just getting started in the process of buying or selling a home. You have identified them before anyone else, before they are calling on property ads or calling for rates, before they are actively looking at homes or putting their own house on the market.

When you send out your free report, it needs to be very clear to them what the next step is. If you are offering a free automated homefinder service, you need to be very clear on what they need to do to take advantage of it. If you are offering a free seminar on how to buy a home and get the perfect mortgage, you need to be very clear that they should call this 800# to get free tickets for the seminar.

## **3. An Organized And Systematic Follow-up System**

One of the biggest sources of frustration in direct response advertising is the fact that a lot of the people who call are not ready to do something right now. Of course there will be people who respond to your ads who are ready, willing and able to do something right now, but the biggest advantage of using a direct response system is to build a pipeline of prospects who will consistently convert to shoppers in the next 3-6 months.

Now you may be saying, "I don't want to wait 3-6 months! I want people who are going to buy, sell or get a mortgage right now!" Well, that *will* happen when you use a direct response system, but they are just the tip of the iceberg. The real gold mine is in the people who are going to be doing something in the future.

Think about it. You have identified someone who has raised their hand to tell you that they are interested in more information about something that will lead them to buy, sell or get a mortgage. Now it's up to you to identify who the real prospects are out of this group and be able to help them get what they've told you they want.

In order to do this you need to have a systematic way to continue to follow up with people until they are ready.

### **Here's How It Works**

One of the best things you can do to keep in touch with your prospects is to send them evidence of success cards every time you help someone get the benefit they contacted you about. For example, let's say someone contacted you about your free report on how to sell your house for top dollar fast. You sent them the free report, but they didn't respond. Does that mean they are not interested in selling their

house for top dollar fast? Probably not. They just aren't interested in selling their house for top dollar fast *right now*.

Instead of dropping that person, writing them off as no-good-tire-kickers and not doing anything else with them, send them an evidence of success card every time you sell someone's house for top dollar fast.

Keep offering them the next step, which may be an over the phone market evaluation, or a list of homes in the area they are considering. Whatever you do, keep offering these people evidence that you are ready, willing and able to help them – whenever they are ready.

## Chapter 11

# Top 10 Ways To Generate As Many Leads For First-Time Buyers As You Can Possibly Handle...

Here are 10 great ideas you can use to get a constant stream of first time buyers coming into your funnel. Download the Homefinder script on the Marketing Library and record it on your hotline, then work your way through this list of powerful and inexpensive lead generation ideas until you can't handle all the business you're generating.

### **Ask 12 "Disciples" To Help You**

When you decide that you're going to focus on first time buyers, and you've got a great offer (I help people buy homes in Winter Haven with Zero downpayment), one of the easiest things you can do is get some of your advocates to help you find them. Make a list of twelve people who can be your advocates in this process. Have a conversation with them and tell them exactly what you're doing and ask them to help you find people you can help.

### **Evidence Of Success Postcard**

Send an evidence of success postcard to everyone in your database. Tell a story of how you helped some first time buyers get a home with zero downpayment. Close the evidence of success card saying something like *"If you know anyone who is living in an apartment and paying more than \$550 a month in rent, I can help them buy a home in Winter Haven with zero down payment. Give them this card, or have them call 1-800- 800-8000 "*

### **Ugly Yellow Signs**

One of the cheapest and most effective ways to generate leads for first time buyers is by using ugly yellow signs in front of every listing you have. Call your sign company and get some yellow signs, get a magnum marker, and write the words "For Sale (or Lovely Homes)...Zero Down Payment...Free Recorded Message...1-800-800-8000" and put those signs everywhere you can. Use them as directional signs, put them on busy intersections, put one in front of your office, in front of your home, at your mother's house...you get the idea.

## **Flyers In The Grocery Store, Convenience Store, Library...**

This one is simple. It's just like creating little yellow signs. Get some yellow paper, a black marker and write "Winter Haven...Lovely Homes...Zero Down Payment...Free Recorded Message...1-800-800-8000" now on the bottom of the page create some tear off tabs that say "Lovely Homes Zero Down Payment...Free Recorded Message...1-800-800-8000." Now photocopy 50 and make a game out of finding creative places to put the flyers. Make a list of all the places you placed the flyers and delegate the whole system to a student check on the flyers every week or two.

## **Business Cards**

If you go to a quick printer, you can have 500 to a thousand business cards printed on yellow stock with the same message you put on the yellow signs for a very low price. These cards will be something you can use to give your disciples to help you find first time buyers. Another way you can use business cards is to go to the office supply store and get some Avery Business cards that will go through your ink-jet or laser printer, and put a picture of your listings with the zero down payment message. Give them to your sellers to hand out to everyone they see at work or their friends. They'll be much more excited about handing out a business card that has meaning for THEM.

## **Flyers On Cars In Targeted Apartment Complexes**

One of the best ways to get lots of first time buyer leads is to pick an apartment complex that has rent equal to or more than what it would cost someone to own a home with zero down payment. Print up yellow flyers that look just like yellow signs and pay some of the neighborhood kids to put the signs on the windshields. This is a great idea, because you know that all the people in the complex are already paying more money than it would take to buy a home, so this has a high probability of success.

## **Classified Ads**

A great time to get first time buyers is when they are already thinking of moving...into another apartment. Place a classified ad in the homes for rent section of the newspaper that says "Winter Haven, Lovely homes, zero down payment, Free recorded message 1-800-800-8000." The principle of plenty says that right now there are hundreds of people in your town right now who are looking to rent a home that would love the chance to own a home if they KNEW it was possible for them. Putting an ad in the homes for rent section will help you find them at a time when they'll be most receptive and curious about your message.

## **Take One Boxes**

Remember the business cards we had printed up in number five? Well, here's a way to get those cards in front of even more people. Get some of the clear plastic business card holders. You know, the ones that let the cards lean at an angle so you can see them. Lots of restaurants and local businesses would let you put one of those by their cash register for free, or an ad in your newsletter...just ask, you'll see.

## **Info Box Flyers**

If you're not using an info box, or you're using an infobox and not using the back side of your property fliers, start putting the same message on those flyers so people will still be able to call your 800# when

they get home.

Think about your infobox as your opportunity to TALK to the buyers as they come up to the box. What would you want to say to them if you were actually in the box when they opened it? “Hi, did you know that you can buy a home in Winter Haven for zero down payment...” That’s the one message that you want to keep repeating and repeating, because it’s the most intriguing thing to the first time buyers...even if they have money for a down payment.

## **Tour Of Homes**

Pick three or four of your listings with a monthly payment most first time buyers could afford. Next, start talking about a tour of homes in your voicemail scripts, on your flyers, etc....so first time buyers can not only hear about how they can buy homes in your area for zero downpayment, but they can come and look at 3 or 4 of them on Saturday starting at 1pm sharp!

Every one of those projects can be done in a very short time, without spending a lot of money. This will make a great summer time project to get ready for the fall.

## Chapter 12

# How To Turn Your Leads Into Lifetime Clients...

Once you have identified a prospect, or they have identified themselves to you as someone who is a good candidate for your services, DO NOT give up easily on this person.

Sometimes it seems like the hardest thing in the world is to make follow-up a priority. I think that part of the problem with our inability to follow-up consistently stems from the unconscious desire not to waste our time. I mean we only get paid when someone buys or sells their home. We don't get paid for the number of houses we show or the number of listings or pre-quals we take. We only will be paid for results!

We are sometimes impatient when people don't buy right now! or don't sell right now! Most of the people I talk to tell me that they drop the ball on as many deals as they actively complete. I know that every one of us could count the deals we've let slip through our fingers in the last six months. How good a follow-up campaign could we maintain if we allocated a budget of only the equivalent of one of those lost deals?

Here's some interesting math. If you can improve your conversion rate by only 5%, instead of converting 1 out of 10, you now convert 1.5 out of 10 prospects. You've just increased your income by 50%.

Using real numbers, let's say that your average commission is \$4000 and out of 300 prospects, you convert 10% or 30 of them. You will have earned \$120,000. Now let's say that instead of converting 1 in 10 you convert 1.5 in 10. Your earnings go up to \$180,000 for the same 300 prospects.

Now, by incorporating a good (make that great) conversion program, you can do several things to increase that number. What if one out of 10 prospects refers you to another prospect? The results are exponential. But in order to make that happen, you have to have a conscientious, concerted, consistent and useful conversion system.

When I first started thinking about follow-up systems, I looked to the businesses in my life that made a real effort to keep in touch with me and convert me to a customer. The ones who came to mind were the catalog companies, J. Peterman, J. Crew, Lands' End, LL Bean etc. and it amazed me how consistent they were in their pursuit of me and how relatively small the lifetime value of purchases I would make.

It got me thinking that if they can extend themselves that much to win me and my few hundred dollars of purchases, how much more could I afford to extend myself to court prospects who would be worth thousands at the least and tens of thousands possibly over their lifetimes.

So let's come back to our situation and what we can do to improve our conversion rate, and keep in touch with people until they buy or sell.

**Fact: For \$25 you can keep in touch with a prospect every 2 weeks for an entire year.**

Problem: Most people don't have a systematic way to keep in touch with people on a regular basis. They are too busy working IN their business to take the time to work ON a follow-up system to convert their prospects to customers.

When I started working on my follow-up system, I wanted to have a system that was virtually on autopilot and that happened consistently without me. I set up a system that segmented my buyers into different groups based on the price range they were considering and decided to keep them informed every 2 weeks of the new listings in their price range. This way I would keep in front of them at least every 14 days. (By the way, they perceive it to be more often than that). I started thinking about how I could make that happen and how to set it up so I could delegate the whole thing!

So here's your homework assignment.

Calculate the value of increasing the effectiveness of your conversion program by 50% and let that number sink in for a few minutes. Then, take a marketing Monday and think, really think about how you could set up an auto-pilot follow-up system that would deliver a WOW experience to your prospects and give them valuable information at least twice a month. Finally, design it in a way that you only have to do it once. Twice at the most and delegate the entire thing to a student or part time person who comes in for half a day to get it done and then tilt your chair back in that oh so satisfying ain't-I-great-position and watch your results

## **Section 2**

# **How To Get More Referrals!**

## Chapter 13

# **Do You Know Exactly What To Say In The First 30-Seconds You Meet Someone?**

I've had two experiences that make me think about the importance of knowing what to say to people in the first moment you meet them, and how experiencing someone who KNOWS what to say in that moment has made MY experience even better.

The first experience happened a couple of years ago in San Francisco (and every time and every city I've been there since) at a furniture store called Jennifer Leathers. If you haven't been to Jennifer Leathers, they're a great store and ALL they sell is leather sofas. They have beautiful showrooms and lots of great decorating accessories, which they DON'T sell. I thought that was great enough, until I learned they have an entirely different store called Jennifer Convertibles that only sells sofa beds!

But here's the neat thing about going in to Jennifer Leathers, when you walk in, the first thing you hear is not the familiar "May I Help You?" -- it's a simple greeting with a question, "Hi, Have you been to Jennifer Leathers before?"

Think about that for a second. That's a question that's easy to answer, and easy to predict the answer. Yes or No.

I remember distinctly being surprised by someone asking me such a great question, because I remember reading about it in Michael Gerber's book, The E-Myth. I'd never heard it in the wild.

I answered "No", and waited with great anticipation to see what was coming next.

What I heard was perhaps the best 15-second summation of everything I needed to know about that store that day.

"Well great...let me tell you how it works. All of the sofas you see are available in ANY of the leathers on the wall (pointing to a big leather display area) they're available for IMMEDIATE delivery, and they're GUARANTEED FOR LIFE. So have a look around, my name is Lisa, and I'll be right over here if you have any questions."

Now that might not have been her exact words...but it's close enough so you can get the point.

The second experience came at an Italian restaurant in Santa Barbara. It was a great July night, and a friend and I were travelling down the coast from San Francisco, and we ended up in Santa Barbara for the night.

This restaurant had EVERYTHING going for it -- It was literally glowing with ambience, it had sidewalk seating, and it was Italian.

We were seated at our table, and a waitress came by to check on us right away, she asked that magic question “Have you been to Fresco Before?” (I can’t remember the real name of the restaurant.)

We answered no, and she said, “Great, well let me tell you how it works...our portion sizes are a little larger, so they’re perfect for sharing. The items highlighted on the menu are the most popular dishes people order here...If you don’t like what you order we can get you something else. My name is Cindy, but you can ask ANYONE on the floor for anything, we all serve as a team.”

Now, both of those experiences did a couple of things – first, they answered the most likely “silent” questions going through a new visitors mind, and second, they both had a confidence builder that made me feel like I couldn’t go wrong. The *Guaranteed for Life* statement of Jennifer Leathers, and the “If you don’t like what you order, we can get you something else” statement of the restaurant.

Those two experiences are shining examples of how a normally DUMB interaction – “Can I help you” – “No Thanks I’m just looking” or “Have you made up your mind yet or do you need a few more minutes to look over the menu?” – can be turned into an outstanding opportunity.

Try thinking about what YOUR main differentiation points are, and how you can weave them into your first interaction with someone new.

## Chapter 14

# The Loyalty Effect: The Hidden Force Behind Growth, Profits, and Lasting Value

What is customer loyalty? How do you measure it and what impact does it have on the bottom line? This book by Fred Reichheld is the first book that looks at the real economics of loyalty and how to use it as an organizing principle for your business.

Over the next decade, thousands of businesses will come to realize that their most valuable assets are their *human assets* – and that to build winning strategies they have to find ways to attract and develop the right human assets and earn their loyalty.

Creating value for customers is the foundation of every successful business system. Creating value for customers builds loyalty, and loyalty in turn builds growth, profit, and more value.

In the book they look at several different businesses that have high loyalty and the impact that loyalty has on the business.

Here's an example from the book.

*On the east coast, consultants to a residential homebuilder were trying to determine why the percentage of prospective customers who actually went on to buy a house differed so greatly from one regional office to another. **They learned that closing rates depended on referrals**, and therefore indirectly on customer satisfaction. While it's pretty rare for anyone to buy a second house from the same builder, satisfied customers do recommend the builder to friends and relatives, and closing rates for referral prospects are significantly higher than closing rates for walk-in customers. It was the difference in referral rates from one region to another that explained the greater effectiveness – and therefore the higher profits – of some sales offices. And the variation in referral rates? That seemed to depend in large part on whether sales people and troubleshooters were in the habit of responding promptly and effectively to buyer complaints in **the first ninety days after people moved in**.*

Just like we teach the value of providing after-sale service and developing lifetime relationships. The real value of loyalty is built after the sale, and not just during the sale.

**Where customers come from is also a key factor in long-term customer value.**

Customers who show up on the strength of a personal recommendation tend to be of higher quality – that is, to be more profitable and stay with the business longer – than customers who respond to conquest advertising, sales pitches or price promotions.

One insurance company tracked customers who came in through the Yellow Pages and found their retention rate and profitability so miserable that management encouraged agents to drop the ads. Customers who come on a recommendation, however, are likely to be there for the right reason.

This book is a great addition to your library and will give you some great ideas about developing your customer loyalty strategy.

## Chapter 15

# 7 Ways To Build Trust With Your Communications...

### 1. Begin with the end in mind

Whenever you communicate, start with a clear vision for what you want to have happen.

Often, we can get caught up in the medium of what we're doing without giving any thought to what we actually want the reader to DO. At the heart of every communication should be the end result, the action we want our reader to take. The meaning of any communication is the response you get.

So, if you're writing a testimonial letter to send to the neighbors around the house you just sold, don't lose sight of the fact that what you really want to have happen is those neighbors call you to come and sell their house.

If you're writing an evidence-of-success postcard, your purpose is to encourage your readers to refer their friends to you by stimulating their reticular activator to remember that Bob at work is looking for a condo (just like the one you wrote about in your postcard) and refer you to Bob.

### 2. Speak to one person

Once you know the purpose of your communication, picture in your mind the one person who would represent your ideal reader.

If you're mailing a testimonial letter around a sold listing, get a mental picture of one of those neighbors. Picture them going to the mailbox, sorting through the mail (over the garbage can) and opening your letter. A letter from a neighbor they may or may not know.

Keep in mind that one in ten of those neighbors is more than likely (statistically) going to sell their house in the next 12 months. With this person in mind, write your letter ONLY to them. Don't worry about the 90 other neighbors who aren't going to move this year. Write to your prospects, not the entire audience.

### 3. Write like you talk

Now that you've got a purpose and a prospect, don't think about WRITING to them. Think more about TALKING to them.

Imagine when they open the envelope, or glance at your postcard that you could magically appear in their kitchen, and have a conversation with them. What would you say if you had the opportunity to sit down with them and explain what you are writing about?

Good letters, ads and postcards are more like a dialogue than a monologue, and imagining a conversation makes writing easier.

#### **4. Think “Baby Steps”**

One of the biggest mistakes I see on the “ad clinic”, is advertising and direct mail that tries to do too much.

The only purpose of your ad should be to get a response from your prospects. Just to COMPEL them to respond to an offer that moves them one baby step closer to you.

An offer that helps you identify the prospects from the suspects in your mailing or the circulation of whatever publication you’re advertising in. An offer for a FREE Recorded Message offering information of value to your prospect will attract far more responses than an offer of \$500 off your closing costs.

The offer of \$500 off closing costs moves people all the way through the decision making process, and the information gathering stage to the other side of a transaction with you. Think only about the easiest offer, and the softest step you can ask your prospect to take, and gently lead them through the rest of the process.

#### **5. Send letters that look personal**

Always remember that people sort their mail over the garbage can. They divide their mail into two categories – the “A” pile, and the “B” pile. In the B pile (garbage can bound) is obvious junk mail, bulk mail and that pile of circulars you always get with every mail delivery. In the A pile is all the mail that is important – bills, birthday cards and all the mail that appears personal in nature. Always strive to get your mail in the A pile.

How? Hand addressing or direct laser imprint (no labels), real stamps, no company logos, no teaser copy etc. You want it to be received and accepted as a letter from one person to one person.

#### **6. Write ads that look like news**

Just like people sort their mail over the garbage can, they read their publication with an advertising filter. They are aware of what is advertising and what is CONTENT. When you write your ads, always make them look like news. Like editorial content. When you make your communication look like news, it gets past that advertising filter, and is read as credible information.

It’s been documented in study after study that ads that look like news get 500% more readership and response than ads that look like ads. Why fight it? Go to the newsstand and get a copy of USA Today, find an article that’s the same size as the ad you’re running, and make your ad look EXACTLY like that article. (*hint: if you take your ad to the editorial department instead of the advertising department, they’ll make it look like news for you.*)

## **7. Tell the truth**

We all have our built in credibility detectors. We all have the ability to tell when something just doesn't sound right. Gerry Spence, the author of "How To Argue and Win Every Time" calls it "the thin clank of the counterfeit."

When I talk to people about their ads and they start telling me about the "angle" they're taking, I always ask them what the real story is. They tell me, and we build around the TRUTH. The truth is always more credible than any *angle* you can imagine.

## Chapter 16

# The Amazing Power of Telling The Truth

When it comes to writing compelling ads, nothing compares to the power of telling the truth, especially in an urgent situation.

I first discovered this secret in 1996. It was the day after Labor Day, and a developer client of mine invited me to lunch. Over lunch he was telling me how disappointed he was that he wasn't able to sell out the last six building lots of a development he had in the Muskoka area of Ontario, where people from Toronto build expensive summer cottages.

He had been running big “Summer Blowout! Last 6 homesites! Big Savings!” type of ads all summer, offering “33% Off” on each lot with very little success. Now he was concerned it would be another year before he sold out.

I asked him why he cared, and he told me he was hoping to use the money from those lots to make a balloon payment on another property he was just starting to develop, but in order to make the balloon payment he had to make it by November 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.

He made me a very generous offer if I could help him pull off a miracle and help him sell these last six lots. (My favorite type of challenge!) I had a lot of credibility with him already, because I had helped him with other marketing challenges in the past, so I told him I thought I could do it, but he'd have to follow my instructions EXACTLY and just trust me. He agreed, and I outlined the plan for him.

First, I said, you'll have to get an official appraisal certificate for each lot dated currently, to give credibility to the 33% off.

Then I outlined the rest of the strategy, and told him we were going to stop running ads that looked like ads, and run an ad that looked like news and told the TRUTH about the situation. I had just finished reading Gerry Spence's book “How To Argue and Win Every Time” and I was really excited to use the ideas I developed while reading it.

That night, I wrote what I still consider one of the best ads I've ever written. The ad was a little less than a quarter page, and had a picture of the view from one of the building lots on the top third of the ad, with a big News style headline that said:

**“I Need To Sell These Six Muskoka Homesites In The Next 30 Days – And I’m Willing To Sell Them For 33% Less Than Their Current (Sept. ’96) Appraised Value...”**

That headline and the picture were on top of two columns of type just like a newspaper article...and the article told the story of what was going on. How he had been developing this property over the last several years, and how he had only six homesites left, and had been unsuccessful selling them and then the words in a subhead **“Here’s My Dilemma.”**

Then we laid out the whole story about how he had an opportunity to make a balloon payment on another property, but he had to do it by November 1<sup>st</sup>. We went on to describe the specifics of some of the properties, and that we had just had them individually appraised and gave the size of some of the lots, explained that they would be sold on the next 2 weekends and that people could call this toll free number for an information package on the lots, and directions on how to get there.

**The ad ran one time in the Toronto Sun, and all six lots were sold within two weeks!**

The thing that made that ad work so well, is that it told the truth in a very specific and compelling way. People believed it to be true, saw the value in the 33% savings off the official appraised value, and took action.

I’ve since used variations of that ad to help sell several individual homes in a very short time period. Telling the truth using specific details and a story that explains the reasons behind your offer is one of the most compelling things you can do. Next time you have a great offer to make, try telling the truth about it in a story...and just watch what happens.

## Chapter 17

# How To Get Your Suppliers To Refer You More Business By Teaching Them To Fish

There is a way you can set up your marketing so that none of the money you spend is your own. The best way you can do this is by leveraging your relationship with your service providers.

Now, you might say, “But everybody I talk to has already tried advertising in folders, or on maps or whatever”, but I’m saying that probably nobody has approached them in a way that is of direct advantage to them. Being on a map or folder that is handed out is great but it’s not direct response. It’s just another passive institutional advertisement for them.

They’re out there thinking that people are going to be studying the map and will see their name (among three other attorneys, home inspectors, or mortgage brokers), and call them. But nobody ever does call them and they decide that advertising doesn’t work. So when you go to them and ask them to take an ad in your homeowners service center, they are remembering the other things they’ve “tried” before.

By now you are starting to realize that the reason it didn’t work for them in the past is because they weren’t using compelling direct response advertising. They were putting their name in there with no compelling reason to call.

### **So, let’s look at this for a minute.**

What would happen if the home inspector was able to attract potential home buyers on his own? What if he could find people who are going to be buying a home in the next 90 days? Are they of any value to him yet? They’re of no value to him until they buy a home. They don’t need a home inspection until they find and make an offer on their new home. So most home inspectors position themselves behind Realtors and Lenders in the food chain. They spend all their time trying to get us to send our mortgage opportunities to them. They make the rounds to our offices, just to be seen. Again. Hoping that we’ll send them a home inspection. If they do advertise it’s just to show their name and their price in hopes of getting someone to call them, but when they do call it’s because they are price shopping.

The worst thing about attracting people with a low price is that they have no loyalty. When they attract people with a low price they are saying, “Buy from me because I have the lowest price.” *But what they are also doing is conditioning them to believe that a low price is the most important thing and they are inadvertently giving the buyer permission to go somewhere else if they can find an even lower rate and ultimately that’s what happens.*

Like most of your service providers, and I'm just using the home inspector as an example, there are so many opportunities for education that aren't even being taken advantage of.

That's why an ad with a headline that says something like, "Don't Get Stuck With A Money Pit! Home inspector reveals six signs that could mean expensive trouble..." and a free recorded message is going to attract calls.

When buyers start the process of buying a home, they are hungry for one thing....INFORMATION!

If the home inspector takes on the role of inside information provider, he can position himself in front of the food chain, identify buyers maybe even before they call a realtor or lender. By providing this kind of valuable information up front it's very likely that the buyer will choose him when it's time for their home inspection. Plus, if they contact him first, he is in a great position to refer you as a realtor or lender.

**What I'm suggesting is that if you take the time to educate your service providers about emotional direct response advertising and you give them the tools they need, you are teaching them to fish instead of feeding them fish all the time. And when they are fishing for themselves they are fishing for you too!**

So it's not about "Buy an ad in my homeowner's service center directory" – it's about giving them a way to attract business on their own. So now you've got a home inspector who was so conditioned to waiting passively for you to give him a chance to talk to your buyers and is now empowered to find business on his own. For him it's probably the first time he's ever had that kind of control, once he sees how well it works he's going to want to do more of it and he'll start running the ads on his own. More than you would yourself. And you've created a loyal and lasting referral relationship.

So think about how you can empower your home inspector, your attorney, your interior decorator, your moving company...etc.

Instead of getting them to put their business card in your directory for \$50 a month. Think of how you can teach them to fish on their own and refer people to you. Even one referral a year from each of your suppliers is going to be worth much more than that \$50 a month ever would.

## Chapter 18

# How To Generate Leads While Delivering World Class Service

Delivering world class service can be one of the best lead generation activities you can do. Lead generation doesn't stop after you get the listing. In fact some of your best lead generation opportunities come as a *result* of delivering world class service.

Here are some of the great opportunities you have:

### **The Sign**

As soon as you get a new listing, a whole new world of lead generation opportunities opens itself up for you, starting with the sign. The sign on the lawn is going to attract an immediate interest and how you handle it will determine whether it will be a goldmine of leads or just another thing you do to sell the house.

I have been looking for a new house here in Florida, and my fiancée and I are constantly driving around neighborhoods looking for just the right house, and I have a new appreciation for how buyers want information. Most for sale signs give me no information. Very occasionally I will find a house that has a rider telling me I can get recorded information, or even less frequently I will find a home that has an information brochure box. (Almost always empty)

I think how great it would be if I could drive up to a house and see a sign that said “**For sale. Zero down payment. \$1850 per month. Free recorded message 1-800-888-8888.**” Or another sign telling me to tune my car radio to 1610am. I'd love to be able to go to the brochure box and take a brochure that told me about the house and offered more information on a free recorded message.

Start thinking about your signs as an entire experience from the voice of the customer. They are driving around looking for homes in that particular neighborhood and they drive by your new listing, what kind of information will they be able to get from your signs? How can you motivate them to call you?

Spend some time thinking like a buyer and drive by a few of your listings experiencing it from their eyes.

## **Just Listed Letter or Postcards**

Another opportunity for lead generation is in contacting the neighbors around a new listing. They are going to be very interested in what's going on around them.

One of the big mistakes I see happen all the time is people sending out just listed postcards to 1000 or more homes. Blanketing the entire neighborhood with postcards. It doesn't take that many to do the job. Instead try sending out a postcard to the 50 immediate neighbors to the listing, and think about creating a relationship where you are keeping them up-to-date on what's going on in their neighborhood.

Another very effective thing you can do is *send a letter from the sellers to the neighbors*. Tell them that they are selling the house and asking the neighbors to help them, by letting the people they work with or friends about the house and the 24-hour information line you have set up.

## **Weekly Updates**

If you set the stage early in the relationship that you work By Referral Only and that you need their help, you can empower them to help you by giving your sellers business cards with information about their house. And also information about your Hotline service where buyers can get free recorded information on homes they can buy with Zero, or low down payments. If you have an understanding with the sellers that you will keep them up-to-date on the activity weekly, you can use this opportunity to ask them who they have met during the week that is going to be buying a home.

If you have 20 listings and you call them all once a week, you will have 1000 opportunities over the course of the year to get referrals from your sellers.

## **Just Sold**

When a property sells, you have an opportunity to re-contact all the neighbors to that listing in case any of them are going to be selling their homes. Statistics are very high that someone within that 50 home radius is going to be selling their house in the next 90 days.

If you are offering them free information on how they can sell their house in less than 60 days, and all they have to do is call a free recorded message, there is a good chance that they will at least call for the information. Again, this isn't something that you need to send out to 1000 homes or blanket the entire neighborhood to have success. It's about a more intimate communication with the 50 homes immediately around the home you just sold.

## **Endorsement Letters**

*The most powerful thing you can do after you have sold a home is send a letter going back into the neighborhood from the sellers.* A letter that comes in an envelope with the sellers return address, written from the seller's voice, and signed by the sellers. An endorsement letter like this to the neighbors about the experience they had working with you, and how they were able to sell their house quickly and for a great price can be one of the best tools you have.

So next time you get a new listing, start thinking about the opportunities you have to generate new leads, and at the same time deliver World Class Service.

## Chapter 19

# How Do You Decide Whether Someone Is YOUR Kind of Prospect?

What do you do when you're generating a lot of leads, and you find people who are not quite ready to take the next step, but may be ready in 6 months or so?

Just because somebody calls you after listening to your APS Hotline, or leaves their name and number for a FREE report or other information by mail doesn't mean they're a true prospect. It also works the other way around, just because they aren't ready to move RIGHT NOW doesn't mean they won't be a good prospect eventually.

If you have a consistent way of discriminating whether someone is a prospect or not, and you use the same parameters every time, you'll increase your opportunities to help the people who are prospects. You'll also cut down the amount of time you waste trying to work with the people who aren't prospects.

### **Here are 5 questions you can use to determine who the real prospects are...**

#### **1. Are they reachable by phone?**

One of the first things I do when deciding who, among the leads are going to be prospects, starts from the voice mail message they leave. That's where the screening process begins. A voice mail message can be an invitation to start a dialogue, or it can tell me that someone is just using us for information, or doesn't trust anyone. Learn to listen to tone when people leave a message, you can tell a lot just by the tone of their voice. People can sound like they really want you to help them, or they can also sound like the last thing they want you to do is try to contact them in any way.

I always rate the people who sound inviting, leave good information and a phone number, e-mail address or a way of contacting them to continue the dialogue, higher than people who leave a message with "Send the report to D. Jackson at P.O BOX 123, Winter Haven, FL 33884". If someone leaves the bare minimum of information, and even goes out of their way to make sure it will be hard to contact them, I will send (or not send) the information and move on. Sometimes, you'll get a surprise when they call you back after getting the information and want you to help them, but I always leave it up to them to make the next move.

You'll find that people who are friendly on the message, are usually friendly when you talk to them. Which brings me to the second parameter I use for evaluating leads...

## **2. Are they friendly when you talk to them?**

You need to realize that leads are a dime a dozen. You can always generate more leads. It's not worth the time and the effort you put in to working with a new client to work with anyone who is not just a delight to work with. I like to take a long term view of this, even from the very first conversation. You need to ask yourself if this is someone you would like to have a lifetime of telephone conversations with.

Remember, the goal of working with someone new in the first place, is to build a lifetime relationship with them and create advocates. You know what it's like when you *click* with someone on the phone, and what it's like when you just don't connect. It's definitely not worth trying to drag information out of someone, or trying to convince them that you can help them. It's all about finding the GREAT prospects. The ones who are happy to talk to you, will give you all the information you need to help them, and are receptive to you.

It's the difference between swimming up-stream, and going WITH the current downstream. It's much easier when you're swimming with the current of their cooperation.

## **3. Are they moving in the next 12 months?**

This is a question you need to have an answer for. Is this prospect truly going to move in the next 12 months, or are they just tire-kickers or free-information gatherers? It's important to know the difference and be able to identify the true prospects. If someone is relocating to your area, and getting all their ducks in a row by getting information in advance, and you've been fortunate enough to identify them early in the process, you've got a great opportunity to build a relationship with them. When the time does come, you'll be the first person they think of. IF you've got a system in place to keep in touch with people who are not ready to move RIGHT NOW. Maybe you're only willing to work with people who are going to move in the next 90-days, whatever your time frame, you need to decide whether they meet it, and act accordingly. The important thing is that you have a time frame, and use it as a parameter for accepting new prospects.

## **4. Do they know what they want (and are they realistic)?**

Now, not every prospect is going to know exactly in every detail what they want in a home, or exactly what their plans are. There's a big difference between someone who knows that they'd like to find a 3 bedroom, 2 bath home in the southeast part of town, and someone who is "just sort of looking right now, we're not sure what we're going to do, we may move to Alaska..."

What you're trying to do is determine whether they've got sincere intentions on moving, and have thought about it to a level where you can help them.

The second part of this question is about deciding whether someone is realistic in what they want to do. If someone has every intention of moving in the next 12 months "if we can find a 4 bedroom country home on at least an acre, facing southwest, with a 5 car garage for about \$85,900", it's unlikely that you can help them.

The important thing is that you decide up front whether you can help them, and be prepared to let go of the ones you decide are not real prospects.

## **5. Would they like you to help them?**

If your prospect has a positive attitude, has answered all your “questions” favorably, then it’s time to tell them about the ways you can help them...your automated homefinder service, your home loan finder service etc. And if they’d like you to help them, they’ll follow your recommendations and come in for an appointment with you, or speak to your lender, or whatever you offer them as the next step.

Remember, you’re a consultant, and you are giving people their options. You’re not a salesperson trying to CLOSE for an appointment. When you’re prospects view you as a consultant offering them valuable service, they’ll do whatever you suggest. If they view you as a salesperson, they’ll resist you every step of the way. Always let people make their own decisions on whether to accept your help. The ones who willingly follow your recommendations are the best ones to build lifetime relationships with.

Well, that’s my 5-question test for new prospects. Not everyone passes, and that’s ok. I’m only looking for GREAT prospects. When someone does pass the test, I’d be willing to invest time and money serving them for the six months to a year before they decide to buy or sell a home. I know that the investment is going to pay off in terms of building a predictable (and profitable) pipeline of new business.

## Chapter 20

# **Want More Advocates? Try Nurturing Lifetime Relationships First Instead of Last...**

As a By Referral Only consultant, you know how important Advocates are, and the value of extending your relationship with clients beyond the transaction by providing after sale service and nurturing lifetime relationships.

When you go out of your way and make a special effort to let your clients know that you're not just in the relationship for a one time transaction and want to build a lifetime relationship with them, they reciprocate that effort with referrals. You've seen it happen. It doesn't take much effort to make someone feel special, and you can often create advocates with just a simple monthly mailing and a few phone conversations during the year.

The challenge is when you're just getting started with building advocates. You may not have many clients you can nurture this type of relationship with. So, what I'm going to suggest for you is to stop thinking of nurturing lifetime relationships as the LAST step in the By Referral Only process, and move it up to the FIRST step.

Instead of waiting until someone does a transaction with you before you start nurturing a lifetime relationship with them, start out by choosing a group of people you would like to become your advocates and start by being an advocate for them.

Start with 100 or 200 people and make a commitment to grow as many advocates as you can. (I think you'll see that you can't over-invest in these activities.)

### **Here are 7 things you can do to start nurturing lifetime relationships and building advocates:**

#### **Send Evidence of Success Postcards**

This is maybe the highest return simple activity you can do. It's easy to get started. Get your calendar and choose a day during the week (a remodel day) and mark the first Tuesday (or whatever day you've chosen) of the month for the rest of the year as evidence of success day. Make a commitment to mail an evidence of success card to your group at least once a month. Tell simple stories of how you are helping people who have different needs and ask them to refer anyone they know with a similar need to you, so

you can help them too. (Check out the Members Only Resource Exchange at the ByReferralOnly.com website for some great samples)

### **Use Gift-Giver Postcards**

Take your calendar and mark off the third Tuesday of the week as Gift Giver Day, and send your clients a postcard that offers them a special savings from a local business, or better yet, something for free. These cards should be positioned as a gift from you. You can use any kind of savings you can think of. Start by introducing your clients to the businesses you frequent, and make it an introduction to the business from you. (see #5 to find out how this works)

One month you could give them a free 30-day pass to your health club. The next month you could give a free haircut from your hairdresser. You could give a discount on dry-cleaning, or a Free loaf of fresh baked bread from your favorite bakery.

### **Start Sending a Monthly Client Newsletter**

The next thing you should do is start sending a monthly client newsletter. Don't write your own. Send Terry Hunefeld's. He does a great monthly client newsletter that you can get on disk every month with all the articles already written from a client-centered point of view. It's easy, it's inexpensive, and it will pay off in thousands of dollars of new business and referrals you wouldn't get otherwise.

### **Be an Advocate**

The best thing you can do to build advocates for yourself is to first BE an advocate. That means looking out for someone, and adding value to their life. Here's how it might work for you. You send a letter to your group with a simple list asking them to check what kind of services or products they are going to need for their home in the next 90-days, so you can negotiate a group discount for them. (This would work great by email so they can just click a response to you right away. You do have the email addresses for everyone in your group don't you?)

Out of 200 people, 23 tell you they are going to get their carpets cleaned in the next 90-days. You go to your carpet cleaner and arrange a special price for your group, and everyone wins. Your group wins because they get a special price on something they were going to do anyway, the carpet cleaner wins by getting new clients, and you win because you're seen as a person who really cares for them. You can be an advocate in all kinds of ways – that was just one example to get you thinking.

### **Get Other Local Businesses Involved**

Another great thing you can do to build advocates is to get other businesses involved in your efforts. Just like the example above, you can give them access to your group, as an advocate. They'll be more than happy to participate because it's a way for them to access people they wouldn't otherwise be able to reach.

This isn't something that you're trying to make money doing by selling ads in your newsletter, or on your postcards. The best thing you can do is offer to do this for free. It's not about getting \$50 or \$100 from a local business, it's about winning that local business as another advocate. There are lots of things that business can do for you that are far more valuable than money. They could let you put a take-one brochure box on their counter by the cash register. They could do a reciprocal mailing to their clients or

in their monthly statements. Think outside the box and start looking for ways you can build lifetime relationships with other businesses.

### **Add Real Value**

There's a difference between adding value and just adding stuff. If you are concentrating on making people's lives better, saving them money and time then you are adding real value. Think about the things you are doing for people with your advocacy program, and how much the actual value of it is. Can you save people \$1000 this year? To do those kind of numbers, you need to start thinking about what their needs are and focussing on ways you can help them. The advantage is, it's often easier to save people money as a group than as an individual.

### **Invite their friends**

After you've been consistently adding value to people for a period of time, you can take the next step and ask them to invite their friends to be part of your advocacy group. Offer to send them the monthly newsletter, the Gift-Giver postcards and represent them in getting group buying discounts on products and services for their home. If you truly are adding value, they'll be excited about introducing you to their friends so they can feel like they're adding value too.

Think about the advocates you could build by running a simple program like this. You don't need to wait until you do a transaction with someone to start building advocates, start right now with people you would LIKE to be your advocates. It doesn't take that much time to get it up and running, and the investment will multiply itself the very first year.

## Chapter 21

# What To Do In The First 90-Days After The Celebration To Start Nurturing A Lifetime Relationship With Your Clients...

How do you keep a relationship with your clients growing after they have moved in to their new home? Continue to deliver service and add value after the transaction is completed and you'll take your relationship with your clients to a new level.

Now, remember from the loyalty ladder, the part about turning customers into clients and then into advocates. This is where it all happens. What most people do is complete a transaction with someone and then go back to finding someone new to work with. Put the new customer on their calendar list and send them a card at Christmas.

Providing after-sale service is all about making sure that people make a smooth transition into their new home, and demonstrating to them that you are going to continue to have a relationship with them.

Something happens to your relationship with a customer when you go beyond what they expect from the situation, when you extend your service beyond the point when you actually get paid at the closing, and you are *still* attentive to them.

Most people perceive the things you do for them *before* the sale as trying to win their business. Courting them. And they perceive the things you do *during* the transaction, no matter how great they are, to be just great service – service that they are paying for. But when you continue to show an interest in really serving them and continuing to add value after you've been paid, the only conclusion your customers can come to is that you really do care about them, and you really do want to have a relationship with them!

### **How do you get started?**

Start thinking in terms of what you can do for them in the first 30, 60, and 90 days after they move in.

***The reason this period is so crucial is that they will be starting to build a new identity as homeowners.*** They will be doing all kinds of little things for the house, they will be buying most of the furniture and

decorating materials they will ever buy and they will be showing the home to all of their friends and relatives.

**The easy way to start your after-sale service program is to at least get three extra effort services integrated into your system.**

**In the first 30 days**, you could arrange with a decorating store to get your clients a discount on any paint and wallpaper they buy. You could arrange for a free consultation with an interior decorator. You could arrange for a discount on furniture or carpeting or for any number of services or products they might be interested in as new homeowners.

You could put together a sort of welcome wagon program featuring local businesses that you arrange discounts with for all your customers and clients that buy homes.

**In the first 60 days**, you could arrange to visit with them and talk about mortgage reduction strategies. Ways they can easily cut the amount of interest they pay over the life of their mortgage, like bi-weekly payments, or using their tax return to pay down their mortgage, or rounding up to the nearest hundred.

These little things can make all the difference in the world to your ongoing relationship with them.

A lot of these things seem like little things, but in the spirit of doing them after you have already been paid as a friendly gesture, you are taking your relationship with them to a friendship level. You will be amazed at how the investment pays off in referrals and repeat business.

## Chapter 22

# Here's How To Get All The Testimonials You'll Ever Need...

## And What To Do With Them Once You Get Them!

Testimonials are the most powerful marketing tool you could ever use. Not the kind of testimonials you're used to seeing. Most of the time testimonials don't say anything. They're empty accolades. "Dean was terrific. He's honest, he's hardworking and he really delivers great service. I would recommend him to anyone!" What that says in a nutshell is – NOTHING!

"Terrific", "honest", and "great service" are some of the fluffiest words in marketing. They sound good, but they don't really say anything at all. What you're looking for is a benefit packed STORY of how you helped someone just like your prospect buy or sell a home.

When a prospect reads or hears a story of success from someone who is just like them, it leads them to the conclusion that if they follow the same steps, or do the same thing as the people in the story they will get the same results.

Robert Cialdini, in his book "Influence" (available at the By Referral Only book store – and highly recommended reading.) calls this the principle of "Social Proof," and it's one of the most powerful weapons of influence.

Imagine you're prospects hearing something like this:

*"My name is Bob Jones, and we used to live in a cramped 2-bedroom apartment at Riverlake. We were trying to save up enough money to buy a home of our own, but every time we saved a little money it seemed like something would come up that we needed the money for and we were right back where we started. We were getting very discouraged.*

*One day I went out to my car and there was a flyer on the windshield that said we could buy a home with **Zero Downpayment**.*

*I took the flyer to work and called the 800#. When I heard that we could buy homes in Winter Haven without a down payment, I called Dean Jackson and he*

*answered all my questions and got us approved for a Zero downpayment mortgage.*

*Six days later we found the perfect home on a quiet street with a yard for our son. And the best part is our mortgage payments are \$70 less than we were paying in rent!*

*If you're frustrated with trying to save up enough money to buy a house, call Dean Jackson so he can help you get a home with no money down, just like he helped us."*

Now, the difference between that testimonial and the "honest, hardworking and great service" accolades, is that the story is much more motivating because it illustrates exactly what could happen to you if you're in that situation.

### **So how do you get those testimonials?**

Well, you have an opportunity every time you help someone buy or sell a home. Nothing is more powerful than the story of how you helped them – told in their own voice.

### **Here's a simple 3-step plan to get all the testimonials you'll ever need**

#### **Step #1: Get a multiple box voicemail service from Hotline to Hot Properties**

Just like the one you use for your APS system. (You could use the one you have already, but it's so inexpensive it makes sense to have one specifically dedicated to creating an archive of audio testimonials.)

#### **Step #2: Make a list of 10 of your biggest fans**

Your best advocates. People you were able to help buy or sell a home that would be willing to tell their story. Tell them that you're setting up a success story hotline and would really like them to be included. Have them call in and share their story in their own words following the format above. (They'll be more than happy to do it.)

This will get you started easily, and you can start using them right away.

#### **Step #3: From now on, every time you help someone buy, sell or get a mortgage, have them record their story on a new extension**

Pretty soon you'll have a complete archive of success stories you can share with your prospects. You'll be able to pick and choose the ones that most match your prospects situation.

#### **Here's what to do with all those testimonials once you get them...**

1. Once you have your testimonials you can transcribe them and use them with a picture of the family outside their new home in a Happy Client Album.

2. You can create an Interactive Advocate Reference List. Use short excerpts from the stories with a headline to fill a page with short stories like the one below with the name and the extension number your prospects can call to listen.

Like this:

*We didn't know we could buy without a down-payment!*

*We used to live in a cramped 2-bedroom apartment trying to save up enough money to buy a home. Now we have a lovely 3-bedroom home with a yard, on a quiet street – and the best part is our mortgage payments are \$70 LESS than we were paying in rent!*

*Bob and Mary Jones 1-800-888-8888 ext. 102*

3. Use them on evidence of success postcards.
4. Use them as a letter to send back into the neighborhood or apartment complex they came from.

So there you have a simple way to get all the testimonials you'll ever need, and four great ways to use them.

# **Section 3**

## **How To Organize Your Business!**

## Chapter 23

# Is Overchoice Keeping You Average?

## Here's How To Narrow Your Focus, Choose Your Customers, And Learn When To Say NO!

Recently, I was reading a great book called “The Wizard of Ads,” by Roy H. Williams and I came across something that made me think. The passage said;

*“The average American cannot say no. This is why he is average. The temptation that defeats the average American is a thing called overchoice, a deceiver that whispers, “You don’t have to choose. You can have it all.” Overchoice creates a world of too many options.”*

It made me think about the Realtors and Lenders I meet all the time. Overchoice is almost always present when someone is struggling, or frustrated with their real estate or mortgage business – and a laser-like focus is almost always present in thriving businesses.

A good example of overchoice is when you cast a wide net in target markets, geographic markets, qualifying parameters and daily activities.

The ability to say no, is a skill most of us have not mastered, yet it’s the one skill that will allow us to have MORE of what we want. Narrowing your focus is a way of saying no, and allowing yourself the space to pursue what you really want.

After reading this book and thinking about it, I’d like to suggest some simple steps to overcome overchoice, and really create a laser-like focus.

### **1. Narrow your target market**

When I ask people what their target market is, very few people can tell me specifically what market they serve. The most common answer I hear is “buyers and sellers.”

Try this for the next 30-days, instead of working with anyone and everyone looking to buy or sell a home, narrow your focus, choose a market you feel comfortable in, and create a customized solution just for that market. Take one market at a time. There are lots of available market niches, and when you choose ONE, you can focus on developing a system for capturing as much of that specific market as you possibly can.

Here are some targets to start with

- First time homebuyers
- For sale by owners
- Move up buyers
- Retirees moving to smaller homes
- People who want to build homes
- People who want to move to the country
- Golf course properties
- Condos.

Notice how you naturally gravitate to the markets that have the most appeal for you, the markets you've had the most success with, or the markets that you seem to do the most in.

When you choose a narrow market your whole attitude changes. You'll feel more focused. You'll be more effective in finding prospects because you know specifically what you're looking for. It'll be easier for you to ask for help from your sphere of influence. Instead of asking if they know anyone who's going to buy or sell a home, you'll be asking if they know anyone who is talking about moving to the country, or anyone who's thinking about building a home. Try it and let me know.

## **2. Narrow your geographic area**

I talk to people all the time that boastfully share how big an area they cover. They're all over the place. "I cover the entire tri-county area", they say. "If they want to buy, I'll take them anywhere in the state."

How much simpler would your life be, if you decided to narrow your focus only to the area that's closest to where you live and work, and let go of the areas you barely know or have to travel to get to? I know that if you thought about it, there are listings in distant areas you've taken that you wish you hadn't. There are buyers you've traveled to the edge of the earth with and spent more in gas and traveling than the money you earned.

I think what causes people to cover such a sweeping geographic area is the false security found in the feeling of fishing in a bigger pond. That having a bigger pool of prospects to draw from will give them a better chance of finding someone to work with.

The truth is, the more narrow you make your focus geographically, the more you can become the absolute specialist in that area. There's a confidence that comes from knowing every house for sale in your area, and knowing every comparable sale intimately when you go in on a listing presentation.

### **3. Narrow your qualifying standards**

When you know what you do, where you do it and how long it takes you, you can identify the common characteristics of a successful relationship. Once you know those characteristics, you can set up qualifying standards so you only take on relationships you know are going to work. It's about identifying in advance who the great and sometimes great relationships are going to be and choosing to work only with those. Once you know the set of circumstances that have to be present to sell a house in less than 60 days, and more importantly the qualities that are present when a house is NOT going to sell in 60 days, you can gracefully avoid those situations.

Knowing which listings NOT to take, or which buyers you probably can't help is just as important as knowing which ones you can help. Taking a listing just because you can, or allowing someone to "test the market at this price" when you know it's not going to work just creates extra work for you, and sets you up for failure.

### **4. Narrow your activities**

When you're focussed on a very specific target market and you're focused on serving that market very well (systematically), it makes your job very simple. You can set up an assembly line type system that gets the key tasks done in a way that gets predictable results every time. Knowing what needs to be done, how it should be done, and documenting how you've done it in the past creates a situation for you to delegate, or even better, outsource it to somebody else.

Try this: Make a list of every task in your service cycle and when it must be done and think hard about a) whether it really NEEDS to be done, b) how it could be done more effectively or systematically, and c) who you could delegate it to. Don't stop until you can eliminate, delegate, or outsource every one of those activities except the absolute core relationship steps like appointments and key contacts with your clients. Freeing yourself up from having to be involved every step of the way creates the space for you to go even deeper into the target market you choose, and help even more people.

## Chapter 24

# Here's A Simple Way To Organize Your Business Around It's Three Key Functions...

I've been thinking and studying a lot lately about the structures that support a successful Real Estate or Mortgage business, and what would be the optimal organizational system. I've been watching closely as I see Realtors and Lenders building teams of assistants and sometimes just creating more confusion in the process. Here's what I've discovered.

A simple way to think about your team, and its needs, is to break it down by the periods of your relationship with your new prospects from the time they first respond to an ad or call you, all the way to the time they become advocates.

This model is based on the premise that you can't do all things at all times, and a way to divide your team up into three individual Operating Units, based on the function they provide along the timeline of your relationship with a new prospect.

The simplest way to think about these units is as the Before Team, The During Team, and the After Team. In this model, the ideal situation would be to have separately run units that serve their function completely.

### **The Before Team**

The BEFORE team is responsible for everything that happens to get NEW prospects, and create new business. It's the division that runs your APS marketing, places the ads, tests the ads, gets the yellow signs out there, records and monitors the scripts, etc.

The Before Team is constantly testing and refining your marketing. Its focussed single mindedly on one purpose: to deliver buyers who are ready to buy, sellers who are ready to sell, or people who are ready to get pre-approved for a loan.

The product of this independent unit is measured in the number of these people it yields, and the cost to deliver them.

Think about how focussed you could be if you're only purpose was to generate leads, and you didn't have to get bogged down in serving those leads, or get caught up in the details of a transaction that's falling apart, or putting out fires.

The reason I'm suggesting separate teams like this is because of what I see happening in teams that don't have independent roles like this. The priority is ALWAYS on the urgent transactional things that are going on in these businesses, and consequently marketing, after-sale service and nurturing lifetime relationships take second priority.

If you have a team who's sole function is to do one thing, it can become very efficient at doing that thing. There is no prioritizing, no juggling or compromising, it can focus 100% on performing its best.

### **The DURING Team**

Imagine what it would be like if all you had to do was deliver world class value during the actual transactional process of helping someone find a home, sell their home, or get approved for a loan.

Wouldn't it be great if every time you found someone a home, you had someone else who was waiting for you to devote your whole attention to their needs. Think about how relaxing that would be. You have appointments with pre-approved buyers, they're already committed to working with you, and all you have to do is find them the perfect home and negotiate the contract.

This team needs to be very operationally excellent. They need to be organized and systematized so that all the details get taken care of, and everything gets done efficiently and every aspect works together to create a WOW! experience for your clients.

Most of the time, when Realtors and Lenders start building teams, this is where they get the help. They hire a transaction coordinator, or a listing manger, or a loan processor. Someone to help with the work. The mistake they make is in expecting that same support person to be the one who handles the marketing, gets out the monthly client newsletter, and handles ALL the support functions in the business.

The challenge with this, is the transactional things always get in the way. If you ask your assistant what the values hierarchy is, it's in the transaction. The other stuff – marketing and after sale service – is just a source for procrastination and guilt when they're too busy to do it.

### **The AFTER Team**

The function of the AFTER team is to pick up from the point that someone has a contract on their home, and is preparing for the move. The goal is to provide an outstanding level of after sale service, make sure the clients have a smooth transition into their new home in the first 90-days and then focus on building advocates.

This would be like a concierge service, and an advocacy service. The measurement for this team is the number of referrals they generate – the YIELD from your portfolio of clients. I say yield because your clients are really your biggest asset. If you manage this asset well, you can yield a constant stream of referrals and new relationships every year.

Think about this; If you manage your portfolio of 150 clients for a 20% annual return, that would be 30 new transactions each year. That's certainly worth having someone who is responsible for making that happen!

The best part is, to get a 20% annual return on each client means that they would have to either refer ONE person, or move themselves again in the next 5 years! How easy is that? What if you could get 30% or 40%? The potential here is huge, and if you have a division of your company, an independent UNIT who is singularly focussed on this one task you can see how profitable it could be.

### **So how do you get started?**

Well, the first thing is to realize that an Independent Unit doesn't have to be a staff of 4 for each team, it can be one person, working in their home, part-time, or coming in to the office 5-10-15 hours a week to start. The important thing is that you start differentiating the roles of your business, and start holding each unit accountable for it's own results.

- How many leads is the Before team generating and what does it cost?
- How many transactions is the During team able to handle? How much does it actually cost to sell a house, find someone house, or process a loan?
- How many referrals is the After team generating each month? How many advocates (people who are referring 2 people a year) have they developed?

Start thinking about your business like this, and notice how simple actions can make a big impact!

## Chapter 25

# Here's A New Way To Think About Your Before, During and After Divisions...

One of the questions I'm asked all the time is "How do I budget for my *Before/During/After* divisions?" The most common thing I find among Realtors and Lenders when they first start growing their business is always the same, the first thing they do is start stacking up in the *During* team.

Take a look at your team right now. If you have a team, you probably have an administrative assistant, or processor. A buyers agent or two, a listing manager...and if there are any more people than that, they're usually involved in the *During* division.

Why? Because that's where everyone perceives the MONEY happens. That's where all the emergencies and urgencies happen. That's where all the things that need to get taken care of NOW happen. The things that happen in the *DURING* process are urgent and important, or sometimes urgent and unimportant, but they always receive priority treatment.

Another mindset that hurts in setting up your divisions is the mindset that delegation means you pay as little as possible for tasks that are not directly money-related. So, the natural tendency is to look for a low cost person to delegate to.

### **Here's a New Way To Think About Your Business Divisions.**

When I explain this concept to my consulting clients, I have them imagine that I was the head of a large corporation (it could happen) that was setting up our headquarters in your town and we would be moving 100 people a year in to the area for the next 5 years.

I have the ability to direct those people to any Realtor or Lender I like – and I like YOU. The only thing I ask in return for these 8 new clients every month, is a 25% referral fee.

Would you do it? Most of the people I ask, would do it in a second. Think about it. You've got someone who is going to deliver you 100 ready to buy clients every year for the next 5 years. You don't have to spend any money in advertising, no time prospecting, no wondering where your next transaction is coming from. All you have to do is deliver a world class service to them so I look good.

Wouldn't that be the best thing that could happen to you? What are the odds of that happening? Unfortunately, very slim. But, what if YOU could provide those 100 clients -- what if you had a budget of 25% of your anticipated revenue for the year to find new clients?

Let's say your average commission is \$4000. Do you think you could find new prospects for less than \$1000 each? You've already established that you would be more than willing to pay ME that much for new leads. Why not do the next best thing, and start a division of your company that only finds new prospects.

In By Referral Only, you've got a tremendous resource with the APS campaigns in the MORE library. It's easy to generate new clients for less than that. In fact, you should be able to generate new clients for a couple of hundred dollars.

Think of the difference between what you can generate those transactions for, and the 25% you already told me you'd be willing to pay as the PROFIT of your *During* division.

Now, what about your *AFTER* division? Your *After* division works the same way. It all starts with a goal for monetizing the division. If you'd pay 25% for new business in your *Before* division. Why would it be any different in your *After* division?

Start out by setting the goal of a 20% annual return on your relationships with 150 – 200 people. If you have relationship with 200 people, that would mean 40 referred, or repeat transactions in the next 12 months -- @ \$4000 each that would be \$160,000 from your *After* division, with a budget of \$40,000.

I'd be willing to bet you don't even spend a tenth of that on your *After* division. What if you doubled or tripled what you currently budget for your *After* division, and appointed someone to the position of Advocate Maker. The entire responsibility of this person is to exist and advocate to your clients. Serve those 200 people in whatever way they need, and be accountable for the number of referrals that come from this group.

It doesn't have to be a full time position. Imagine if they spent 10 hours a week on it. Even 5 hours a week. Uninterrupted. Without the distraction of NOW division urgencies. It's their whole job. Their ONLY responsibility. Don't you think that would help increase the number of referrals you get?

If I can get you to do one thing this month, it would be to start thinking of your business in it's individual divisions, and start accounting for them separately. Just changing your mindset like this will build it's own momentum, and soon you'll see exactly how to set up your team.

## Chapter 26

# Here's A Simple 30-Day Plan To Get Started With Results, Remodel & Recovery Days

When I start to work with someone one-on-one, I've learned that the very first thing that needs to be done is to get some stability and predictability in their schedule, before we can do anything else. I've discovered some important things about time management as it applies to Realtors and Lenders especially.

*If you're like most Realtors and Lenders, here's what I've discovered about you....*

Most of the time you're so caught up in working IN your business that you start to resemble a hurricane. You know how you look at the satellite weather map and you can see a hurricane mapped out, and you can see the spread of it as it approaches, yet all around the hurricane is calm weather?

I thought about this because (see if this is true for you right now) their lives are in a constant state of BUSYNESS that they can't think about getting control of it. Yet, if you asked them what they were doing two Tuesdays from today, they can't tell you specifically.

Look at your calendar right now and you'll see what I mean. The next 2-7 days are probably all booked up, with things to do, appointments, commitments and not much room to spare.

Now, look at the week 2 full weeks from today. I'll bet that it's basically wide open, except for your ongoing commitments. This is the key to getting control of your schedule, simplifying it, and creating a CONTEXT for you time.

That's what Result days, Remodel days, and Recovery days do for you. They create Context for your Content. Years, Months, Weeks and Days are the CONTEXT we all work with and what you fill them with is the CONTENT.

**Here's how to use that open period 2 weeks from now to create a CONTEXT for your schedule**

### **1. Start By Choosing A Day To Take Completely Off**

The first step I always recommend is to start with a RECOVERY day. It's fun, and it gives you something to look forward to.

Plan a day when you'll do something you've been wanting to do for a long time. Plan to go golfing, go to the beach, go skiing, go to a museum, spend it with a close friend or your spouse or family. Plan it now and set it in the calendar, at least 2 weeks from now.

I suggest at least 2-weeks from now because if you choose a day sooner, there's more chance that something will "come up" to get in the way. Plus it gives you more time to prepare for it, and make sure you've got everything handled in advance.

Take a highlighter and mark it in your calendar by blocking off the whole day.

This part is important. ***Here are the rules:***

1. It has to be an entire day from midnight to midnight.
2. No pagers. No cell phones. No smoke signals...no communication with the office.
3. It has to be a planned activity involving someone else.

Those are pretty simple rules, right? You can't cheat by "dropping something off at the office on the way" or, making a "quick call to the office to check in." The entire point of this exercise is to get completely AWAY from the business and have FUN.

Once you have ONE of these days, you'll want to have more. Start by planning one Recovery day a week (starting with the 2 weeks from now and every week after.) and eventually, you'll be able to take 2-3 a week.

## **2. Next, Choose A Day To Work ON Your Business**

The next most important kind of day you can use to create CONTEXT in your week is a REMODEL day. These are the days you use to implement the systems and processes that will make your business run smoothly and predictably.

The biggest mistake I see people make when they try to schedule time to work ON their business, is that they wait until they have some free time or a lull in their schedule and try to squeeze it in then. For the first little while of doing this, you'll need to be very deliberate in how you approach it. Just like you did for the Recovery day. Plan it in your schedule 2 weeks ahead and prepare for it in advance.

If you're just getting started with REMODEL days and aren't sure what you want to do with them, take an entire day to really think about your business, what you'd like to start with, and build a plan around the things you'd like to implement.

This would be a great time to really get into your university materials, work on getting your Automatic Prospecting System in place. Find your way around the Real Time Marketing Library. Look over your monthly teleconference call schedule and plan out the calls you'd like to be on.

REMODEL days aren't just about your business either. One of the best things I've done for myself is something I call "Make My Life Better Day." I constantly look for problems to be solved, things I'd like to have or ways to make my life better, and one day a week, I work on solutions and getting the things on my list that would make my life better.

It all starts with making a list of things that would make my life better. The same thing can work for your business. The questions you ask yourself and the answers you come up with are going to show you the things to work on during your remodel days.

### **3. Finally, Choose A Day That's All About Results**

Imagine your life 60 days from now. You're regularly taking at least one or two great RECOVERY days, and you're taking at least one full REMODEL day a week to work ON your business (and make your life better).

You'll already notice some big changes in your life right away. You'll notice that time slows down a little bit. Things don't seem as hectic. You've discovered that the world doesn't fall apart if you're not carrying your pager for a day. You've got CONTEXT in your life.

### **4. The final piece of the puzzle is to have a day that's all about RESULTS**

Having a day that's all about results, gives you a target to shoot at. A time that you know is going to be filled with appointments back to back, so you can really get into flow and be on top of your game. These are the days that you really get to use your unique ability and do the highest value things.

If you're a Realtor, it could be a Saturday, where you have listing appointments in the morning, tour of homes in the afternoon. If you're a lender, it could be a particular day where you lineup back to back to back new application appointments.

Setting up your schedule to have a regular time for nothing but appointments allows you to structure your time and activities towards getting those days completely booked.

Pick a day 3 weeks from now, and make out your ideal schedule of appointments for the day, get your whole team on board for this, and make sure that those appointment times are full. If you have an appointment time that isn't full on that day, pretend that it is, and take that time to think about ways you can make sure that it's filled next week. Make a game out of it, and you'll see a significant difference in your results.

Making these adjustments to your schedule is the best thing you can do to add CONTEXT to all the CONTENT you have in your life. Start simple. Follow the plan, and you'll see amazing results. Remember, step one is to schedule that RECOVERY DAY first.

## Chapter 27

# Five Important Lessons You Can Learn From The Biggest Brand Building Companies In The World...

Over the past several months, I've been doing a lot of reading and studying the "branding" process. The way companies design, package and introduce new products and services to the market, creating a distinct position in the mind of consumers.

When you think of your services as individual brands in themselves, each filling a different need in the market, you can apply the same strategies huge branding companies do to build your real estate or mortgage business. Each segment of the market you want to work with can be approached with a separate "product" specifically designed to solve their problem.

### **Here are five "branding" lessons you can apply to your business now**

#### **Design Your "Product" For The Customer First**

At first it just sounds like common sense. If you're going to create something, you want to design it for the customer first. But I think there's more to it than that. The best brand building companies spend millions of dollars in research and development before they ever release a new product to the public. If they don't feel their product can be the best choice in the category, they don't do it. Even if they've spent millions of dollars, they'd rather cut their losses than release a product that's going to be an also ran.

The simplest way for you to do this is to find out what your customers really want – and give it to them. It's all about truly "selecting" your target market. Empathizing with them and really getting inside their world, so you can provide a service that matches exactly what they want. Never hold back anything that will make the product better or more valuable to the user.

What do your customers really want? What do first time buyers really want? What do move up buyers really want? What about people who are refinancing? Asking questions like those, and answering them as your customer will help you design your product so it has the most appeal and compels your prospects to ask for it by name.

## **Plan To Dominate**

That's a pretty powerful word. Dominate. What does it mean? When I first heard that phrase, I really sat and thought about it. It made a profound impact on me. I thought about how it applies to our business, and how we can use it. Would you say that for any category of the real estate or mortgage business you enter you're planning to dominate? Planning to dominate is a different kind of thinking, and it makes a lot of sense.

Why go into a market segment just to have an entry into that market? How would you approach your business decisions differently if you knew you were going to pick a single category and dominate it? Most realtors and lenders build their business by doing a little in a lot of different market segments, when the easiest thing to do is become an uncontested heavy weight champion of a single category. Category leaders have it easy. The momentum of being a leader is hard to stop. It's worth the investment.

## **Manage Each "Brand" As An Individual Business**

Each of your "Brands" should operate as an individual business, with individual performance requirements as a business unit. Operating as an individual business unit allows the whole operation to flow seamlessly – concentrating on the one thing it does best. If you have buyer specialists that work with you, or you have loan officers that work under you, try assigning them to a specific "brand" team.

What would it be like if you had buyer specialists who truly were specialists in a specific segment of the market? First time buyers, luxury home buyers, golf course home buyers. When you manage each of your "brands" as a separate unit, you really make it simple for your team to create the laser focus they need to come up with exciting solutions and innovations that will keep your brand on top. There's a simplicity that comes with having a very clear mission.

## **Choose A Simple And Distinct Name And Look For Each "Brand"**

Your "Automated Homefinder Service" says something. It has a name and along with it a life of it's own. If you have a name for your service it gives it much more credibility. It doesn't exist until you give it a name. When prospects are searching for a solution to a very specific need, the more your "product" appears to be exactly what they are looking for, the more powerfully they'll be attracted to it.

I say product because that's the way you should be thinking about your service. It really helps to imagine your service as a product on the grocery store shelves, competing against all your competitors service packages. If you were a first time buyer, you'd look for a product that's designed specifically for your needs. How can you package your product to stand out against the competition?

## **Be Your Own Best Competition**

Knock yourself off. Offer a distinct benefit for the same market, under a different brand name. Think of the many attributes in the market. No one service can be all things to all people. Individual consumers are motivated by many different things. That's why companies like Proctor & Gamble can have competing products in the same category that specifically appeal to a different segment. Tide is for people who want the most powerful detergent available. Cheer is for people who want to be able to wash

in all temperatures, and Gain serves a different segment of the same market, all competing against each other, and all leading their category.

How can you apply that strategy to your real estate or mortgage business? It may make sense to have a fee for service brand that helps people sell their homes on their own, and a separate brand that offers a completely turn-key moving experience including packing, moving and getting settled in to their new home hassle free. That would be a higher level of service than is now being offered, and with the premium placed on time by some people they may be ecstatic to pay more to have the complete move handled for them.

I'm sure you can see how two services like that could compete in the same market, and not hurt each other. They are serving the needs of two segments of the sellers market. Make a list of the categories that make the most sense for your business, and then turn them on their side, backwards and inside out to see how you can look at them differently and use these "branding" strategies to dominate every category you enter.

## Chapter 28

# Want An Easy Way To Get Things Done? Try Playing G.O.L.F.

A couple of weeks ago, I was thinking about how much I love to play golf, and how easy it is for me to play golf every day. I love it. I could play all the time. Then I started thinking about why it wasn't as easy to do other things. Like writing journal articles, or free reports or other things, (even though I really like to do them once I get started) and I started thinking about what makes golf so easy to do, and I discovered some interesting things.

I think the reason it's so easy to play golf is because there is an underlying structure to golf that can be transferred to other activities.

### **I started by thinking about the *system* of playing golf from beginning to end.**

I start by *deciding* that I'm going to play golf.

- I get in my car and drive to the golf course.
- I sign in and get my clubs.
- I put on my shoes and go to the first tee.
- I hit my first shot, and I'm on my way.

Now I know that for the next 3 to 4 hours I am going to be on the golf course with no other interruptions or distractions, and when I get to the 18<sup>th</sup> hole, I'm done. I add up my score and see how I did.

**I've discovered the things that make golf so easy can make everything else I want to do just as easy. So I invented an acronym to help me.**

### **G is for a Goal.**

I start with a goal for what it is I want to do. I make a decision. Just like when I decide I'm going to go golfing, I know what I'm going to be doing for the next 4 hours, I've cut off all other options for that time.

I tried this with other things and started scheduling them in my calendar, so I knew what I was going to be doing, and cutting off all other options.

### **O is for an Optimal Environment**

Just like a golf course is set up specifically for playing golf, you need to be in an optimal environment for whatever you're going to be doing.

If I'm outlining or planning a project or doing first drafts of something, I like to do them in a notebook and my favorite environment for that is at a Starbucks or the Virgin Megastore café here in Orlando. If I'm writing on my laptop, I have a special chair that I like to sit in with my laptop on my lap and my feet up. Same thing for conference calls.

### **L is for Limited Distractions**

The beautiful thing about being on the golf course is that you are really away from it all. There are no phones to distract you. There is nobody dropping in to visit. No fires to put out. It's a very controlled environment. The other thing is that it's so easy to stay on track because there is a very systematic way you work through the golf course. You start on the first hole and progress through one hole at a time until you get to the 18<sup>th</sup>.

I started thinking about the ways I could limit the distractions I have while I'm working on a project. For me the biggest distraction is the telephone.

That's where a good voice mail message comes in. Now, when I'm playing G.O.L.F. I leave a very detailed voice mail message that lets people who call know what I'm doing and when I'll be returning calls. That way I can turn off the phones (a trick I learned because I'm not very good at ignoring a ringing phone) and focus on what I'm doing as much as I do when I'm playing golf.

### **F is for a Fixed Time**

When I go golfing, I know it's going to take about 4 hours from the time I leave my house to the time I get back, so there is some predictability that I can schedule around. I know when I'm going to be done and available to do something else.

I started scheduling fixed times for the things I want to get done, and it gives me a sense of calm about the things I'm doing. Time actually seems to slow down, and I'm getting a lot more done. For instance, I know that it takes 3 hours to write a journal article like this from the time I sit down to think about and outline what I'm going to write, to the time it's finished, proofread and e-mailed to the office. So I've started scheduling a fixed time in my schedule, usually one morning, to do nothing but write my journal article.

It's great because now I don't procrastinate about it, or carry it around in my head thinking about when I'm going to do it. I schedule it, and I do it.

You can do the same thing in your schedule, because most of the things you do can be scheduled in a fixed amount of time too. It probably takes you about an hour to organize, write and prepare an evidence of success postcard from beginning to end. (and it's a great thing to do) But if you don't schedule a fixed time to do it the whole month can go by and you won't get it out. (again)

Actually, an evidence of success postcard is a great illustration for this. It's got a **Goal**. Write and mail an evidence of success card to your clients. Now, what is the **Optimal Environment** for doing this? Is it in your office at your computer? Is it at Starbucks over a latte? Is it at your kitchen table early in the morning? Whatever the optimal environment for you would be is where you should do it. Arrange things so that you have **Limited Distractions** by telling anyone you need to what you are doing, and not to disturb you. Put a message on your voice mail that says you'll be returning calls in an hour. Finally, schedule a **Fixed Time** to do it. Mark it in your calendar and schedule around it so you're sure to get it done.

So, next time you have something you want to get done, try playing G.O.L.F. and see if it helps you like it helps me!

## Chapter 29

# How To Turn Six Sheets of Paper, An Egg Timer and A Ball Point Pen Into Your Best Year Ever...

I woke up this morning with that headline in my mind. I was thinking about what I wanted to say in this article before I went to bed last night, and when I woke up...there it was. Sounds like some kind of magic trick doesn't it? In a way it is.

If you're like me, December is a time to look back over the year and see what I accomplished, and start looking forward to the following year. I love fresh starts, and all the possibilities of a new year. The six sheets of paper, the egg timer and the ball point pen are all the tools you'll need to make sure that next year is your best year ever. Here's how it works...

**Step #1: Take the first piece of paper and your ball point pen and write RECOVERY DAYS on the top of the page.**

Set your egg timer for 10 minutes, and start writing about all the things you can think of that you'd like to do on your *Recovery* days this coming year. Let your mind go and just write a list of all the things you'd love to do, or write a paragraph or two about what you'd like for your *Recovery* days.

If you didn't get to take as many days off as you would have liked this year, start by making compelling plans for your *Recovery* days and plan them out in advance for next year.

**Step #2: On the second piece of paper write REMODEL DAYS.**

If you can get into the habit of scheduling your *Recovery* days, and sticking to them consistently, the next most important thing you can do is schedule your *Remodel* days. Start with the goal of scheduling one remodel day a week where you don't do anything but work ON your business.

Set your egg timer for 10 minutes, and write down a list of all the little things, the RACKET going on in your head, that you would like to get handled in the coming year. Things like getting your network set-up at your office. Learning how to use Outlook 2000. Spending some time at [ByReferralOnly.com](http://ByReferralOnly.com) to really figure out how to use the resources available to you. Setting up your accounting system.

I like to call this my "magic wand" list, because they're the things I would love to have done if simply writing them down meant they were going to magically get done. Funny enough, the things I write

down seem to get done almost unconsciously. I think it probably has something to do with sending a message to your subconscious that *“Hey! This must be important...he’s writing it down.”*

### **Step #3: On the third, write RESULTS DAYS.**

Now, set your timer for another 10 minutes, and write out an ultimate scenario of what a perfect *Results* day would be for you. A vision of what that day would look like if you could have it any way you want.

When would you start? How many appointments would you have? Would they be listing appointments or buyer appointments? Would you be taking loan applications? All the things you can imagine that would make that day perfect. Beginning the year with a clear picture of what perfect looks like, will be an inspiration for you on your *Remodel* days to work towards making your perfect results day a reality.

### **Step #4: On the fourth piece of paper write BEFORE UNIT.**

Now that you’ve got the vision for your *Results, Remodel, and Recovery* days, it’s time to make a list of all the things you ALREADY know you want to do in the *Before* unit, the *During* unit and the *After* unit of your business.

Set your timer for 10 minutes and free flow a list of all the things you would like to get in place for your *Before* unit. What kind of lead generation system would you like to work on? How about your website? Create this list as if completing it meant it was going to get done. Your focus with the *Before* unit is on generating qualified leads for your during unit to work with. Stay focused on the individual unit here.

### **Step #5: On the fifth, write DURING UNIT.**

Do the same thing for your *During* unit. Make a list of the touch points you’d like to add to your world-class service delivery system. Imagine your customer experience time line and list the new systems you’d like to install in your business. Remember, the goal of your during unit is to generate one referral DURING the transaction from 50% of the people you work with.

### **Step #6: On the final piece of paper write AFTER UNIT.**

What things would you like to get installed in your *After* unit? Are you sending an evidence of success and letter from the heart as a minimum? Are you sending your clients Terry Hunefeld’s client newsletter every month? What kind of special events would you like to schedule with your clients this year?

Once you have these six sheets of paper, photocopy them and put one set in an envelope marked December 31<sup>st</sup>, and use the others every week as a guide for what you’re going to do during the week.

*On Sunday night, or on Monday morning, the egg timer exercise is great to do in six minutes. Spend one minute on each of the six topics instead of 10 and focus on the most important thing you can do in each category this week.*

I think you’ll find with your Master list and the weekly review you’ll get more done this next year than you ever thought possible!

### **Merry Christmas...and a Happy New Year.**

## **Section 4**

# **How To Create A Money Making Website!**

## Chapter 30

# Your Website is NOT a Personal Brochure! **Here's How To Turn Your Website Into An Automated Lead Generation Magnet For Your Business...**

If you're like most Realtors and Lenders you probably have, or are in the process of getting a website or webpage. Here's my thinking on the internet and how you can use it to create a lead generation machine for your business.

What most people don't understand about the internet is that it's not about posting a website and suddenly Billions of people from around the globe will flock to your site. That just isn't true. The most important thing you need to consider when you get a website is TRAFFIC. People can't, or won't visit your site if they don't know about it. Traffic is the most important thing for your website to thrive. Getting traffic to your website is just like getting hits to your APS hotline. How do you get this traffic?

**Well, there are three main ways to get traffic to your website:**

### **1. Registering Your Site With The Major Search Engines**

The first place most people start searching for information on the internet is by going to a search engine, like Yahoo, Infoseek, or Hotbot. There are literally hundreds of search engines on the internet – they're basically indexes of all the webpages on the world wide web. Kind of like the old card catalogs at the library.

You can register your site with the search engines by visiting them and clicking on "Add your URL". You type in the address of your site, and the search engine sends what's called a "spider" out to view your site, index the content, and register it in the database. Now, when someone searches for "Orlando Real Estate" your site will come up as one of the ones to visit.

The search engines are one of the major ways people will find your site, especially if they are searching from out of town. There are special ways to increase the likelihood of your site getting a higher ranking on the search engines – like using "meta tags". These are hidden description words that tell the search engine spiders what your site is all about. You need to ask the person who is designing your site about these.

## **2. Links And Banners From Other Sites**

The second way to get traffic to your site is by getting “links” from larger sites. These larger sites are sometimes called a “mothership.” Realtor.com is a good example of this. Realtor.com is a large collection of pages that are all related to real estate. They promote the site heavily, and sell “links” from their heavy traffic site to your site. This way, you’re able to siphon traffic from their promotion and efforts to direct people to your site.

If you work with a large real estate or mortgage company, odds are they have a corporate site they promote and you can get a link from that site as well. You can also get links from local sites like your Chamber of Commerce, or your community website if they have one. These links can be in the form of “banners”, which are like mini billboards, or a 25-40 word listing ad.

Just like any lead generation advertising, these banners and listings MUST capture the interest of the people reading them in order for them to click on the link and be taken to your site. You should treat these just like your APS lead generation ads. You can have a banner ad or a listing that says “Kentwood. Lovely Homes. Quiet Tree-Lined Streets. Zero Down Payment...Click Here.”

Just like getting hits to your hotline, only now you’re looking for hits to your website. You’ve got to keep in mind the same principles that apply to attracting hits to your hotline. It’s not about you, it’s about the prospect and what THEY want.

## **3. On-Line And Off-Line Promotion**

The third way to get traffic to your site is through online and offline promotion. Putting your website address on your business cards, in all of your ads, on your property fliers, in your Infoboxes, in your newsletter – literally everywhere you have printed materials.

Your offline advertising is just like any kind of lead generation advertising. The ads should compel people to visit your website to get valuable information. Now, once you have people coming to your website, you need to remember the purpose of your site. To generate leads. To get prospects to raise their hand and tell you they’re interested in buying, selling, or getting a loan.

One of the biggest mistakes I see when I look at Realtor and Lender websites, is that the site is all about them. It’s not completely client centered and loaded with ways for your prospects to get more information.

**A webpage is NOT a personal brochure.**

It’s not about posting listings with a picture from every angle, and telling everybody all about YOU. It’s about getting people to identify themselves as prospects. It’s about getting people to either call your hotline or leave their e-mail address for information.

One of the first things people should see when they come to your site is a way to get more information by e-mail, or by calling your 800 number.

You can use pop-up windows with compelling messages like, “Lovely homes, quiet-tree lined streets, zero downpayment. FREE Recorded Message 1-800-800-8888.” You can even have a yellow background so it looks just like an ugly yellow sign!

You've got to remember that you CANNOT sell a home on the internet. Just like you can't sell a home with an ad in the paper. You MUST actually meet with the people to help them, so your focus has to be on educating and motivating your prospects to want to meet with you.

### **Here Are Some Of The Tools You Can Use To Capture E-Mail Addresses**

Remember the olden-days when sending out FREE reports meant that you had to print off reports, stuff envelopes and ...heaven forbid...SPEND MONEY on postage?

In the new world, with e-mail and autoresponders, you can send FREE reports instantly and without doing anything. It all happens automatically. In real-time. Your prospects see a report they'd love to have, and with a click of their mouse it's sent whizzing off to them instantly. And their e-mail address is forwarded to you.

Now, you've got a prospect you can follow-up with.

*Remember when following-up meant more reports, more stuffing envelopes and more postage?*

Well, now, there are autoresponders that can be set up to send multiple messages automatically spaced to go out every day for seven days, or every other day -- whatever you want. All without you doing anything but setting up the messages once.

Most e-mail software like Eudora or Outlook also allow you to create LISTS of people, so you can send a message to hundreds of people with one click of your mouse! **INSTANT marketing.**

The internet definitely offers a huge opportunity to build a list of future prospects and keep in touch with them for FREE. You just need to get your mind focussed on using your website as a lead generation tool and NOT a personal brochure.

## Chapter 31

# Five Little Things That Make a GOOD Website GREAT!

Why settle for average when amazing can be *this* easy?

You've got a website. You've got your own URL, and you're starting to get some visitors, but you're not convinced your website is working.

Here are some simple ways to get MORE visitors, MORE prospects and MORE ready-to-buy buyers, ready-to-sell sellers, and ready to borrow-borrowers...

### 1. A Compelling Reason To Get Visitors To Your Website

The most important part of any web strategy is what you do to get people to your site in the first place. Simply putting a site up is not going to get them there – you need to orchestrate the process of getting people to your site.

One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to get people to your site is to start putting your URL on everything you do. Put it on your business card, put it on your property flyers, put it in your info-boxes, on your voice mail, in your property ads. But don't just put your URL on there alone. Start using some compelling REASONS for people to come to your site.

**“Hundreds of homes you can buy in West Palm Beach with Zero Down Payment at [www.LivinginWestPalm.com](http://www.LivinginWestPalm.com)”**

or, on the property flier outside one of your listings

**“Take a virtual tour of this home at...”**

offering a reason for people to come to your website will improve the response you get to your ads, and an increase in visitors to your website.

### 2. Real-Time Statistics

Once you have a working strategy to get people to your website, the next step is to keep track of what's going on. One of the most important statistics you can know is the number of unique visitors that come to your site daily, weekly and monthly. Knowing this number can help you adjust your advertising strategy, and also know what's happening when people come to your website. Are they coming and leaving, or are they engaging in a dialogue with you?

Once you start monitoring your numbers, you'll effectively be able to track the effectiveness of the offers on your website. You'll be able to know that when you have 100 visitors to your website, "X" of them will request something from you, or start a dialogue by email. When you know those numbers, you can test different offers on your front page and see the impact it has right away.

Just like any direct response advertising, knowing your numbers is a big advantage. If you can increase the number of requests/100 visitors, you can increase the percentage of people who ultimately become clients.

### **3. A COMPELLING offer on your front page to get visitors to share their e-mail address with you.**

If you think about your front page as the table of contents, or the cover of Cosmo magazine...and it's job is to compel people to take advantage of your services, what kind of offers can you make people that would compel them to leave their email address?

Think like your prospect. What would they like that you have access to? How about information by email on the best properties they won't find advertised yet?

How about a **FREE Report by email about special Zero Down Home Loan Programs that the banks won't tell you about?**

Whatever you offer, the best thing you can do is put your offer right up front. Make it compelling and get it up there on your front page. Putting your offer on the front page will increase the chances that your visitor will see it, want it, and take advantage of it.

One of the biggest mistakes I see is burying your offer in the depths of your website, where only a few people might stumble over it.

### **4. An autoresponder/listserver to handle all your prospect follow-up**

The greatest thing about the internet, is that it gives you the opportunity to completely automate your marketing. You can use technology to sort and sift through all your prospects and deliver only the very best ones to you – when they are READY to buy, sell or get a loan.

The most important tool for doing this on your website is an autoresponder/listserver. My favorite is getresponse.com because they have the ability to pre-load as many messages as you want, and send them to all the people who request something from you in any interval you want. You can send a message the instant they request something, and follow-up messages on day 3, day 7, day 10 day 14 etc...as many as you want. When you load the messages, they are delivered in the exact same order to every prospect individually starting with their first request.

You can also "broadcast" a message to everyone on your list whenever you want. This is great for sending out your "Weekly Best-Buy" or "Home Loan Of The Week" newsletter. Think of this list as an opportunity to communicate for FREE with people who have raised their hands and told you they're going to be buying a home or getting a loan sometime soon. This is a great list to offer free buyer workshops, free over the phone consultations, your homefinder service, a tour of homes. All the things that you can think of to advance your relationship with them.

## **5. A Very CLEAR next step...**

Think of your website as a catalyst for a relationship. Don't think of it as a way to *avoid* a relationship by giving them all the information they need, and hoping they call you when they're ready.

Your website should have the purpose of *connecting* with your prospects, letting them know that you understand EXACTLY what they need and want, and that you have a way to give it to them. It should be very clear to the best prospects that if they are going to buy a home in your town, the BEST thing they could do for themselves is take advantage of your FREE Homefinder Service, or at least get more information on your Home Loan Finder Service before they just go and get a mortgage from their bank or credit union.

The best websites are relationship starters, and everything about your website should be designed with that in mind. Visit your website through the eyes of your prospect, and ask yourself if what you see would compel you to take the next step. How clear is it that you have a way to help your prospect get what they want and need? And how easy is it to take that next step?

## **6. Get a FREE Marketing-Makeover for your Website**

If you've got a good website, and you want to make it GREAT, call the coaching club and make an appointment to come on the next WEB-Clinic. The calls are on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 4pm Eastern Time, and I'll work with you one-on-one to make your website more compelling.

You'll see what other By Referral Only members are doing and follow along click-by-click as we look at all the aspects of their current strategy and develop more compelling ways to make their websites more responsive. You can get a mini-makeover, or you can just eavesdrop as I work with other members, and see what they're doing. Either way, you'll get some incredibly profitable ideas you can use for yourself.

## Chapter 32

# Here's A 4-Step Formula For Building An Awesome Lead Generating Website...

**EYEBALLS + E-MAILS + HEARTS = FACES**

When you start out to set up and implement your website strategy, you have to put first things first - you have to win their EYEBALLS by getting them to visit your site.

When they visit your site...you have to win their EMAIL address.

When you have their EMAIL you need a strategy to encourage them to share the desires of their HEART. This level of trust and confidence can only be won through baby steps, and only when you've won their heart, they'll show you their FACES.

**You can't skip steps.** It's all about BABY steps...don't startle them. Let them move at their own pace. Here's how it works...

### **Step #1: WINNING EYEBALLS**

This step includes everything you need to do to get visitors to your site. Getting people to fire up their browsers and come to your site because they see something of value.

Your strategy can include simple things like getting your URL on EVERYTHING. Little classified ads, adding an invitation to your APS scripts, half page harmon homes ads, infoboxes, e-mail buddy lists, targeted e-mails.

You can also get eyeballs to your website through using search engines and links at other high traffic real estate sites like Realtor.com, homeseekers and homeadvisors.

The important thing to remember is that you need to DO SOMETHING PROACTIVE to get visitors to your site. It's not enough just to build your site...you've got to do everything you can to make sure people know about it, and all the BENEFITS they'll get

## **Step #2: WINNING E-MAILS**

This step is all about structuring your site for its primary purpose...to get e-mail addresses of your visitors. It's important to get those e-mail addresses so you can start a dialogue with them, and build their trust over time. In order to do that successfully, you have to ask yourself... "What do they want?"

What opportunities are you giving them to share their email? Are you using direct response copy to encourage your visitors to request your weekly nuggets, free e-books, free reports by autoresponder? How easy is it for people to respond to your offers?

If you FOCUS on making irresistible offers, and making it EASY, EASY, EASY for people to respond by just leaving their email address, you'll see your response rates go way up. This is one of the key numbers you should be measuring. You want as high a percentage as possible of your visitors to leave their e-mail address when they come to your site.

## **Step #3: WINNING HEARTS**

Nothing happens until they're willing to share the desires of their heart, and they won't share their heart until they're not afraid of you. What do they really want? What opportunities are you giving them to share their hearts? Things like a sign-up page for your **Free HomeFinder Service** by e-mail, free online pre-approval, free custom printouts of homes in their price range.

Always remember to begin with the end in mind... you want messages like:

"I want a three bedroom 2 bath home in South East, with a garage in the \$150,000 - \$170,000 range...and we'd like to move in APRIL."

"We make \$86,000 a year and we have good credit but we don't have any money for a downpayment...can you help us?"

"How much house can we afford?"

It's not about getting EVERYONE to share the desires of their heart. You're looking for the GREAT prospects.

### **Here are five parameters I use to define a GREAT prospect:**

1. Willing to engage in a dialogue
2. Friendly and cooperative when we communicate with them
3. Moving in the next 6-12 months
4. Know what they want (and are realistic)
5. Would like us to Help them

It's all about finding people who are willing to help-us-help-them.

## **Step #4: WINNING FACES**

Only when you've won their heart will they show their faces. Ultimately...Nothing happens until you meet them face-to-face. What opportunities are you presenting them with to meet you?

Meeting Face to face doesn't necessarily mean a one-on-one appointment in your office. You can use more non-threatening offers like Free homebuyer workshops, tour of homes, group showings and ultimately buyer consultations or home loan consultations.

Using and mastering this 4-step formula will ensure that you have a profitable, well thought-out internet strategy to get as many new prospects as you want.

## Chapter 33

# Five Easy Ways To Start Using E-Mail To Grow Your Business...

E-mail marketing is a great way to grow your business with very little cost, and lots of upside potential. If you're just getting started using email in your daily business life, here are five things you can start doing right away.

### **1. Offer E-Mail Reports on your Info-box flyers, ads and newsletter...**

In the old days when you were advertising free reports, it took a lot of effort to run a campaign because you had to retrieve the messages, prepare the reports, stuff the envelopes and take them to the post-office. Now, with e-mail, you can have the whole process automated, and practically for free. An easy way to start is by offering free reports on your Infobox flyers, in your ads and your newsletter. You can set up your email program so that it will automatically reply to any messages with a certain subject line by sending your free report, and you'll be building an e-mail list of prospects you can continually follow-up with for free.

But, what do you send them? Check out some of the free reports on the Members Only Resource Exchange at [ByReferralOnly.com](http://ByReferralOnly.com)

### **2. Weekly Best Buy E-Mail List**

Once you have a list of people who are interested in buying a home in your area, and you know what price range they are in, you can communicate with them every week by e-mailing a list of the best buys in their price range.

The easy way to do it is to keep a running list in your journal or in your mind of the best properties you [or your buyer agents] see each week, and just give a short description of those properties in an e-mail. The easiest way to get started is just to set aside a day of the week that is going to be the best buy day, and send it out regularly.

I like Wednesdays, because that gives you time to set up appointments for the weekend with people who are prompted to call you by one of the properties they see. This e-mail is most effective if it has a personal tone to it. Use a conversational style and just concentrate on getting it out to your list regularly. You'll get better and better at it as you go.

### **3. Use Your Clients E-Mail Buddy Lists**

As soon as you list a property, prepare an email note that your clients can send to their buddy list to start spreading the word about the move. If you have a website, you could include a link to your website where they can get more information about the property. If you are using IPIX tours for your listings, you can include a link to the tour, or just email the tour to them. Your clients will be more than happy to do this, because they really see the value in it, and it helps them get the word out about their house.

### **4. World Class Updates**

E-mail is a great tool for keeping in touch with your clients, and letting them know what's going on with the transaction. Of course, a personal phone call from you is always best, but supplementing those contacts with E-mail helps your clients feel like you are in constant contact with them.

A great idea is to prepare special e-mails in advance as templates, that you can send to your clients as they reach certain benchmarks in the transaction. You could have an email message for the day after they put their house on the market, an email that goes out in 2-3 days after to let them know what's going to be happening, confirm the MLS tour etc.

Look at the timeline of your customer's experience of the transaction, and see where a good time for an e-mail update would fit. The great thing is, once you have set these up, they're easy to replicate for future clients.

### **5. Client Nuggets**

One of the best ways you can use e-mail is to nurture lifetime relationships with your clients. If you don't have their e-mail addresses, now would be a good time to start calling all your clients and update your records.

Right now, we have a library of e-mail nuggets you can send to your clients on the [ByReferralOnly.com](http://ByReferralOnly.com) website. Once you have your clients' email addresses, you can communicate in a meaningful way with them in as little as 10 minutes from beginning to end. Even less once you've done it a couple of times.

Check out the nuggets on the [ByReferralOnly.com](http://ByReferralOnly.com) website and make plans to start adding value to your clients' lives with a weekly nugget.

These five ways to use e-mail are the simplest way to get started, and you'll see the unbelievable power of e-mail marketing.