

The National Association of Realtors , “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing more than 1.3 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

Remarks by Charles McMillan
2009 NAR President
Leadership Summit – Day 2
Change
August 22, 2008

Introduction

Good morning! How is everyone on this wonderful day?

Aren’t Travis and Sherry the best hosts? I feel right at home with them. Since they’ve gone and thanked just about everyone else, I think it’s only fair that we give them a hearty round of applause for their hard work, too.

Before we get into the topic of the day, I want to hear from you...What do you think of our Leadership Summit so far?

Well, I think you are going to like what’s in store for you today. As Sherry and Travis explained our program today is all about change.

I know we have talked a lot about change at NAR in recent years, and that’s good. But, I also realize that change means different things to different people.

Let me explain three things that I think we, as 2009 NAR leaders, need to know about change...

First, change has become synonymous with business. If you are not ready and willing to address change, you will not succeed.

As Nobel Prize Winner George Bernard Shaw said: “The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them.”

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Likewise, we can’t expect our members, and their consumers, to have the same “measurements” every time we see them either. We have to constantly assess their needs and tailor our services to fit them.

Second, as leaders, we must know the difference between short-term change – and real progress.

As American writer Ellen Glasgow said, “All movement is not forward... all change is not growth.”

Consider, for example, all of the changes in our markets during the past year. Home sale and prices change every month, and sometimes every day.

There are plenty of things we could do in our associations that might give our members an edge for a short period of time. But, over the long-term, some of those very same efforts may actually put our members – and the real estate industry – at a tremendous disadvantage.

Our job is to weigh our immediate needs with the longer term implications on our industry and those we serve. For example, in our efforts to bring more people back into the housing market, we must do so in a way that ensures they can keep their homes for the long term.

Third, and finally, I believe all change starts at the individual level. It cannot be forced on an organization – each and every member is responsible for doing their part.

As Aldous Huxley said: “I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be sure of changing is oneself.”

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Today, we have an outstanding line-up of speakers who are going to share their individual experiences with change in an effort to help us accept it as part of the business, recognize opportunities to grow, and see how by embracing change, we can inspire others to do the same.

Conclusion

I want to leave you with one last quote from former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who once said: “Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.”

A few years ago, another NAR President, Bill Chee, said much the same thing, when he warned us that the “lions are coming over the hill.”

Ladies and gentlemen, the lions are still on the prowl and the train is barreling down. Are we going to lie down and wait? I say “NO.”

We ARE going to work hard and move full steam ahead, *United Toward Tomorrow.*

Thank you!