

# Brainstorms for Salespeople

## Key to success

If you're new to the business, you may be sabotaging your chances for success without even knowing it. In your enthusiasm for your first listings and sales, you may be forgetting the most important step: listening.

To truly serve the buyers and sellers with whom you work, ask yourself, Do I really get the point of what they're saying? Test your understanding with questions that probe for more information. They may begin with how, why, when, what, and where. After you've received the responses, summarize them out loud to be sure you've understood everything correctly. That way, buyers and sellers will know you really care. And when you show you care, success is sure to follow.

REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®

Brenda B. Kretschmar, GRI, CRS® *Coldwell Banker-Kretschmar Realty, Greenville, Mississippi*

## Follow up

By the time you've performed services above and beyond those required to finalize a transaction, you may have made friends of the buyers. You know they'll speak highly of you as a real estate professional. Since a recommendation from such satisfied buyers is valuable, you really must stay in touch.

Start by attaching a calendar to the outside of a tickler file for quick referral. With a tickler file and calendar, you'll be prepared to send any company mailings to buyers. You can even send a holiday card or an anniversary date-of-sale card. Valentines can also be effective, since they're not expected.

Public information messages are a thoughtful follow-up and can provide a real service for owners. In some states, owners must file homestead exemptions to qualify for a tax break on their residences. Overlooking the filing date can be costly, so a friendly reminder will certainly be appreciated.

Your tickler file can be prepared for probably under \$5 and in minimal time as you close the sale. At that point you'll have pertinent information relating to the sale and the new owners.

REALTOR®

Patricia Dyer McPhail, GRI, *Colonial Realty, Hattiesburg, Mississippi*

## Door prize

Methods for drumming up business can become stale. How can you hold an open house while courting other sellers? Offer a door prize. It's a wonderful way to get information about prospective buyers who may be sellers as well.

Keep the door prize in a conspicuous location. After all, it's supposed to be an enticement. Almost-

new fleamarket items would appeal to nearly anyone. You could even coordinate the door prize with the particular house. For example, you could give away a tool kit if you're selling a fixer-upper.

Have visitors put their name, address, and phone number on a piece of paper for the drawing at the end of the open house.

When you arrive at the winners' doorstep, you have the chance to view their home. That may give you an opportunity for a new listing. Besides, they were probably impressed with the way you conducted your open house and would like you to do the same for them. If they live in an apartment, try to find out whether other tenants are interested in home ownership.

RENLTOR®

Sandra Derby, *Don Williams Associates, Norfolk, Virginia*

### **On the silver screen**

After several years in other businesses, my husband and I decided to move from Pennsylvania to Florida and sell real estate as a spouse team. But our relocation presented some problems that we hadn't anticipated because of our enthusiasm about moving. Specifically, we realized that in Florida we knew no one and no one knew us. And when you're in real estate, with its emphasis on networking, that's not a good combination.

So we began a media blitz targeting the buying and selling market. Our latest endeavor has been to contract with a local movie theater to display a slide of us on each of its eight screens before and after every movie it shows. We had the slide professionally prepared with the caption "Buying or Selling Real Estate? Think the Charles Team." We also included our office and home telephone numbers.

The theater estimates that about 2,000 moviegoers a day see the slide. And when repeat moviegoers see our slide, they're bound to become familiar with us.

Chances are, no other real estate professional is taking advantage of theater advertising. Your creative self-promotion campaign will probably be remembered long after the popcorn is gone and the movie is over.

REALTOR®

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